

Conversations on Spirit Divine

Part I

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Preface

This is the third book in the series of the publications made by the author revealing spiritual knowledge harmonising between science and religion. This book is written in continuation of the book on "the Evolution of the Human Soul" and this is an explanatory discussion between the author and the divine being who declares that he is Swami Vivekananda on some of the topics dealt with in the first volume published under the name "Spiritual Science". It is indeed very difficult to establish harmony between material science and spiritual science as material science is dealing with secrets about the external universe while spiritual science is dealing with the knowledge about Spirit Divine. It was desired by the great Swami Vivekananda to bring out such a publication to establish harmony between science and religion as he found that such an adjustment is necessary at this age. His desire is being fulfilled by this publication as he is dictating these books as revealed by Divinities as ordained by the Cosmic Being.

The advent of Sri Ramakrishna signifies various adjustments and evolutions suited to the need of this age of material science. It is declared in Geetha that the Lord of the universe will appear for making such adjustments in this world and Sri Ramakrishna's advent fulfils such a need. It was Swami Vivekananda who appeared from the state of Cosmic Being to introduce spiritual renaissance needed at this age that brought out ideas for a new adjustment. It was again destined by the Lord that the Swamiji ought to be the instrument in establishing a movement to introduce new ideals upholding the ancient spiritual heritage of India. He introduced a new evolution in the conception of Godhood both in the west and the east so that human society can accept a God who is a Cosmic Being beyond all differentiations of caste, creed and colour. These publications reveal divine knowledge for such an adjustment since the Swamiji is the person destined to be the author for such adjustments and evolutions in this plane of earth and in the higher regions of spirit as well. It is ordained by the Lord that these publications may be made by him in a wonderful manner after his life-time. We place this book also as an offering at the feet of the Lord who is described in this book as Cosmic Being. It is known that there will be two or three parts more to be published on "Conversations on Spirit Divine" as and when revealed.

Swami Vishadananda

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CONVERSATIONS ON SPIRIT DIVINE.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, Sri Ramakrishna is said to be an incarnation of Mother Divine. Again He is treated as an incarnation of the great soul who was born as Sri Rama and subsequently as Sri Krishna. You have described Him as the embodiment of all aspects of Gods and Goddesses while you were living in this world. How is it that He is being described in ever so many ways?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, He was all these and yet beyond all these. You have heard that He Himself declared that He was born from the highest plane of sublime knowledge and bliss. In a vision, He saw that He reached that glorious height and that from that wonderful plane of divine light a child was manifested as embodiment of the same divinity. He meant by that statement that this child was really from the plane of Mother Divine who is glorious divine light of knowledge and bliss. He also hinted that He Himself was the child. This state of light of knowledge is called Saguna Brahman in Vedantic literature. Those who consider the highest manifestation of Brahman as Mother Divine, treat this state of Saguna Brahman as Para Sakthi or Chit Sakthi or Mother

Divine. Being born from this state of divine light He can be considered as an embodiment of Divine Mother or conceived as a manifestation of Saguna Brahman. He has declared during the last days of His life that the same principle that was born as Rama and later on as Krishna is this Ramakrishna and that declaration was made by Him as He knew that that divinity also was manifested in Him. During His period of spiritual practices He had wonderful experiences of different Gods and Goddesses of different faiths and religions. He had visions of these Gods and Goddesses as entering and disappearing into Him. Thus you will see that Sri Ramakrishna was the embodiment of all these Godhoods of different faiths and religions. Further, He became a knower of Brahman by having the experience of Nirvikalpa state of Samadhi which is the highest state in superconscious experiences. This attainment makes one identified with the highest principle beyond all differentiations of relative planes. You may conceive Him in any way you like.

DISCIPLE:—I do not understand why Sri Ramakrishna was treated as an incarnation of Mother Divine on the face of your detailed explanations regarding the state of His personality. I think that it is easy to conceive Him as a special manifestation of the Spirit Divine.

SWAMIJI:—There is only one Spirit as the substratum, sustaining power and attaining destination for all that we see and know as existing. This Spirit is called Brahman, the Absolute. This Spirit exists beyond all our conceptions and understanding. It is the unmanifested state of the Spirit Divine that is the basic principle of everything in this cosmos. The same principle becomes vibrant in a lower stage and that state is full of divine glory. Wonderful powers are manifested in that state. That state is called Saguna Brahman by Hindus. Ancient sages did not know anything about Mother Divine. They spoke of the highest state of Brahman. Later on some of them got revelations about the state of Mother Divine and we may find mention of such revelations in the Vedas of Hindus. Before the time of the Puranas (epics) there was a period known as the age of Agamas (science of secret occult practices). Followers of secret occult practices are known as Saktheyas. They worshipped God as a female deity in different aspects and forms. Slowly that conception of the deity evolved into the state of a cosmic being from whom all these universes are born. That state of Godhood is called Mother Divine according to the followers of that sect. Saguna Brahman (vibrant state of Spirit Divine) is the source of all these universes according to ancient seers of

Truth. Brahman, the Absolute is beyond everything. Bengal is one of the places in India where people worship this aspect of Godhead as Mother Divine, with devotion. Sri Ramakrishna was born in Bengal, where Mother worship is predominant. You know that all human beings grow, cultivating culture according to their surroundings and associations. Sri Ramakrishna was born in a place in Bengal and as such, His environments helped Him to be a follower of Mother Divine. By divine will He had to live in a temple dedicated for Mother worship, and carry on services of the deity there. Thus He got the idea of Motherhood of God well established in Him. He went on with His spiritual practices fixing up that aspect of Godhead as His chosen ideal and He got super-conscious experience of wonderful light of Divinity. He declared that that wonderful light was of Mother Divine as He conceived Motherhood of God as the highest ideal.

DISCIPLE:—Followers of other religions do not have the conception of God as Mother of the universe. They rather conceive God as the creator or Father in Heaven. I desire to know if there is any difference in these conceptions.

SWAMIJI:—I told you that the highest state of God is unmanifested divinity. It is impossible

to describe that state in anyway. An illuminating divine light is the manifested state of divinity. That power is called Father in Heaven or Mother of the universe by followers of different religions. That state of Divinity is the source of all these visible and invisible universes. It may be called Father or Mother according to our conception. Fatherhood of God is as good as the conception of Motherhood of God. Sri Ramakrishna accepted Motherhood of God as the best and the highest as He was born and brought up under such environments. He was born from the manifested state of divinity and He declared that it was the state of Mother Divine. Sages of India treated that state of divinity as Saguna Brahman. Really in that highest state of divinity, there is no sex or name or form existing. That sublime state of manifested divinity is known as the highest Godhood of different faiths and religions under different names. There is a bad impression created by the followers of Mother worship that the aspect of God as Mother of the universe is full of delusions as She is the power that brings up all differentiations. You might have read about a talk between Hasra and Sri Ramakrishna in the days of His practices. Hasra declared that Sri Ramakrishna's Mother Divine was a deity full of Tamas (darkness). Sri Ramakrishna replied that His Mother Divine was light of knowledge although

she is being treated as deluding power as well. He worshipped and experienced Her state as Chit Sakthi (Power Divine) only.

DISCIPLE:—He might have worshipped Her in that manner, but I desire to know what is Her real stato.

SWAMIJI:—Brahman is unmanifested state of Divinity. When that unmanifested principle becomes manifested divinity in vibrant state, that principle itself is called Saguna Brahman. Motherhood of God is attributed to this manifested state of the unmanifested principle, by those who believe in the Motherhood of God. Followers of the cult of Mother worship conceive that power as the Mother of the universe, as the highest principle in vibrant state is the source of all these visible and invisible universes. Those who believe in the Fatherhood of God declare that God is the creator of everything in this cosmos. All of them speak of the same principle as the glorious power that produces all that we see and know as existing. There is a wrong notion that the Mother of the universe is an illusory power veiling the real nature of Brahman and projecting the relative existence in that divinity. We do not agree with that view as that sublime principle is self-existent and free of all delusions. There is

no power that is capable of veiling the glory of Brahman. Those who conceive that power as deluding may have such experiences as a result of their faith and conceptions. Sri Ramakrishna said that the highest principle which is beyond everything is itself appearing as manifested as power divine and that power is appearing as different manifestations in this cosmos. This view harmonizes both the conceptions of Fatherhood of God and Motherhood of God. Sri Ramakrishna was a special manifestation from that state of divinity to make harmony between different faiths and religions and to prove that God is attainable by following spiritual practices as taught by any religion.

DISCIPLE:—If Sri Ramakrishna is the embodiment of all Gods and Goddesses of different faiths and religions, why did He remain as a Hindu? Why did He not establish a new religion of His own as Lord Buddha did? He could have established a faith that will have universal acceptance. This is another important question that is coming up in my mind.

SWAMIJI:—His advent was to lay the foundation for a universal religious renaissance. He was neither a Hindu nor a Christian. He was the vitalizer of all religions as He was following universal principles acceptable by all. He practised

different religions and attained the highest goal of each religion. At last He declared that different religions are paths leading to the same goal. He showed the path leading to a universal brotherhood. During His life time He had followers from different religions. After his life time His message spread to different parts of this world and we know that there are His followers all over this world. He did not want to be the head of any movement. He was only to give enlightenment in the modern world and to show that one can practise all kinds of Sadhanas (spiritual practices) although one belongs to a particular faith. Therefore He did not establish any new religion.

DISCIPLE:—What was the real purpose served by the advent of Sri Ramakrishna in this world where there are ever so many religions and faiths to show the path to the kingdom of God? Was it not enough to follow the path shown by the sages and prophets of the past? Did he show any new light after getting new dispensation from Mother Divine whom He worshipped throughout His life?

SWAMIJI:—No, he did not show any new path in addition to the already existing religions. His Mother Divine showed Him different methods of spiritual practices of Hinduism and then He was

directed to practise other religions as well. He practised them and attained their goals and then showed practical methods leading to God realization to His followers. He declared that God exists in most tangible and perceptible manner and He was capable of proving the existence of God to others also. In fact He showed and gave experiences to many during His life time. The purpose of the advent of Sri Ramakrishna was to prove the existence of God and to show the path suited to this age for attaining God or the goal of Human life. He has declared that the goal of life in this plane of earth is to attain God realization. He did not want to have a religion of His own. He was born to vitalize all religions and to show light towards the attainment of a renaissance resulting in harmony between different faiths. Really He laid foundation for a universal religious brotherhood. He had dispensation from Divine Mother to do this kind of services in this world. It was of course enough if people were following paths or religions as taught by ancient sages or prophets, but due to the change of time, mentality of people also has changed. Therefore there arose the need for a new divine manifestation to make adjustments according to the needs of the time.

DISCIPLE:—You have described Sri Ramakrishna as an embodiment of Chit Sakthi. That

means that He was an incarnation of Mother Divine who is the presiding deity of the Chin-mandala or the state of cosmic consciousness. Am I to conceive Him as Mother Divine in a manifested form only.

SWAMIJI:—No, He is everything. You may conceive Him as the deity in whom you find joy in your worship and meditation if you have accepted Him as your chosen ideal. All Gods whom He realized entered into His being and became united with Him during the period of His spiritual practices. It is a fact that Mother Divine is the highest state of manifested divinity with cosmic state of consciousness. The highest principle known as Brahman is the essence of divine consciousness. That Brahman in vibrant state is called Mother Divine. Now it is clear that Sri Ramakrishna's advent was from the highest state of divinity known as vibrant state of Spirit Divine.

DISCIPLE:—That state is described by you as the source of all these visible and invisible universes. Then, what is the difference between this great soul and an ordinary human being?

SWAMIJI.—Human beings are born with past impressions and tendencies of innumerable lives. Every action that we do creates two kinds of

powers in us. One is the resultant experience and the other is an intangible power that will induce us to do further actions of a particular order. Some souls are born with divine tendencies and some others are born with tendencies of worldly nature. Results of actions of any life, if unrealized, are sure to be realized during subsequent lives. Ordinary human beings are born with all these limitations. Special manifestations of divinities like Sri Ramakrishna are born without any such impressions or tendencies. They are a special class having wonderful divinity manifested through their lives. Such great souls are called incarnations of God.

DISCIPLE:—Why are we to call these people as incarnations of God? They also appear as ordinary human beings. What is the difference between them and ordinary class of people?

SWAMIJI:—It is very difficult to answer that question. Ordinary souls undergo all kinds of training for a very long time to attain spiritual realizations while these great souls gain such realizations without great difficulty and much training. You will see from the life of Sri Ramakrishna that He achieved the result of many lives practices of an ordinary soul within a few years' time. He practised different spiritual practices as taught by different faiths and religions and

attained their goals in such a short time that no other can imagine it possible to accomplish. It was indeed a divine enthusiasm that was manifested in His life. He attained the highest goals of all those paths accepted by Him as His course of practice and at last declared that all of them were leading to the same goal. This kind of search after Truth is unheard of in the history of religion. It was again a wonder that such an illiterate man made all these researches and found out solutions making the educated world astounded. In course of time He wanted proper recipients for these new revelations and He waited for them. They also came as He desired. He entrusted them with certain duties and disappeared from this world. After His departure, that wonderful spirit did not die. His power worked wonders and a movement came into existence. The movement might have been established as wished by Him and it may be growing by His will. In the case of ordinary men, their wish can be carried out only during their life time. If they are unable to achieve it, their wish will remain unfulfilled for ever. In the case of an incarnation, no wish will remain unfulfilled. Thus He got all His wishes fulfilled during His life time and further He is getting His expectations also fulfilled after He left this plane. His only purpose in life was to lead His followers and also Humanity in general to sublime beatitude. His mission in life is being fulfilled slowly.

His message is spreading throughout this world without distinction of caste, creed or colour. That illiterate villager who was said to be a mad man by the people of the village of Dakshineswar has become the god or prophet for the people of this world at large. Now you can understand the difference between ordinary men and Divine manifestations from this description. I may say that those who do not want to call these great souls as incarnations, may call them as they like. But they are a class of people with unusual divine glory...

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, what is the need of such an incarnation at this time?

SWAMIJI:—It is said that the Lord of the universe will appear in this world of ours to adjust spiritual laws according to the changed conditions of the world and the changed state of mentality of people. This is certainly a time for such an adjustment due to the development of material science. Further there is a growth of disbelief in all that is religious and all that was believed by people of olden days. Not only that, there are many sects and religions existing with diverse views trying to establish supremacy, one over the others. At such a period of time, there was the need for having an adjustment or renaissance resulting in harmony between different faiths. That

is the cause for the advent of a new divine personality like Sri Ramakrishna.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, Lord Krishna was considered a Poornavathara (incarnation with full glory) of the Lord of the universe. He has made such a renaissance as we see in Bhagavath Geetha. It is considered that the teachings of the Geetha are the essence of all paths and faiths and they are really the essence of all Upanishads. It is said that those teachings are for the modern world and that they will remain over new for the future world also. I think that there was no necessity for a new adjustment as all embracing teachings are given in the Geetha.

SWAMIJI:—It is certainly true that the Geetha made harmony between different faiths that existed at the time of the advent of Lord Krishna. It is also true that it was a bold attempt to make such an adjustment at that time, as the people of India were adhering to Vedic ceremonies and sacrifices. Yet it was not a world-wide renaissance that was the need at that time. This world was not so much advanced in spiritual science in those days, although India was having wonderful developments in that science. Material science was also not developed in those days. Lord Krishna made harmony between the then existing systems of religions and faiths. It was after His time that

Lord Buddha established His religion. It was again after His time that Jesus Christ and Mohammed Nabi introduced their religions. Although Geetha proclaims harmony between different sects and faiths, that harmony cannot be treated as all-embracing as new faiths and religions took birth after that period. Further, there is need of having a kind of harmony between material science and spiritual science as this age is one of material science. It was therefore necessary to have a new divine manifestation at this age and that need was fulfilled by the advent of Sri Ramakrishna.

DISCIPLE:—Did Sri Ramakrishna make any renaissance resulting in harmony between material science and spiritual science?

SWAMIJI:—No, He could not attempt to do so as He was an illiterate man born and brought up in a village. He did not know the meaning of the word 'science'. Yet His life can be considered as a laboratory of spiritual science of different faiths and religions. He left the work of harmonising material science and spiritual science to be done by His prominent disciple, the world renowned Swami Vivekananda. The Swamiji tried to make such a harmony between science and religion and he succeeded in making some such renaissance in those days. He was

thinking of proceeding on with that work, but unfortunately he passed away before completing that task. Thus you will see that the advent of Sri Ramakrishna paved the way for establishing harmony between science and religion besides harmonising different religions of the world.

DISCIPLE:—There is a chance of having confusion in understanding what Sri Ramakrishna's state of existence is in the realms of the spirit. Is He a human soul evolved into the state of a Paramahansa or is He a divine Incarnation? In the history of religions we know that there are prophets, sages, Rishis and divine incarnations. I am interested to know the differences between these classifications and the particular state or class in which Sri Ramakrishna is existing.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, there is such a confusion existing. There are different classes of divine personalities such as prophets, sages and incarnations of God. Those who are ordained to be messengers of God as Jesus Christ and Mohammed Nahi are treated as prophets or messengers of God. Souls highly evolved by passing through spiritual practices are men of realizations and they are called sages. Some among them get revelations of spiritual secrets through divine beings of the plane of God-consciousness. There

are different planes of existence in this universe where the human soul can go after leaving this plane of earth and realize the fruits of his actions. The plane of God-consciousness is the highest among them. Divine beings reside there to carry on the works of the Cosmic Being. It is they who reveal spiritual secrets to sages and Rishis. Men of spiritual realizations are called sages in general. Some of them are ordained to have revelations of spiritual secrets and they were called Rishis in ancient India. I have already told you that there is a special class of divine personalities manifested from the Cosmic Being to protect the righteous and to subdue the unrighteous. They are called incarnations of God in India. Some of them are born to make adjustments suited to different ages and places in the affairs of religion. A Paramahansa is said to be a man of the highest realization. After attaining the state of Brahman if one remains in a human body he is called a Paramahansa. Sri Ramakrishna was one such. Some people called Him a Paramahansa, while some others called Him an incarnation of God. He is in fact all these and beyond these states as well. I told you that He was born from the plane of sublime luminosity and divinity as declared by Himself. That plane is beyond all diversities and that is really the state of cosmic consciousness. There

is no distinction there between religions or sects: Personal Gods with or without forms, of the plane of God-consciousness are existing according to the conceptions of the prophets, founders and followers of different faiths and religions. In the cosmic state of consciousness such differences do not and cannot exist. Although born as a Hindu, by divine will Sri Ramakrishna led His life as an uncle moon for all classes of people. He was a Hindu and at the same time He was a Christian and a Muslim as well. He had followers and disciples also from all these religions. He went through different kinds of spiritual practices as taught by different religions and realized the highest goal according to them. Further, He attained Nirvikalpa Samadhi (the highest super-conscious experience) where there is no existence of ego-consciousness or differentiations of name and form or of time, space and causation.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, did He not attain Nirvikalpa state of Samadhi before He practised other religions? Does it not mean that He was a Hindu at the outset?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, He reached the highest state according to Hindu conception. That state is beyond all differentiations. Only after attaining that state He could think of other religions and faiths. Till one reaches that state one will have

the sense of difference between various religions and Godhoods. That is the reason why we say that there are different Mandalas (spheres) in Brahmaloaka for different Gods of different religions and faiths. Sri Ramakrishna was a Hindu and at the same time beyond all differentiations.

DISCIPLE:—Does it not mean that Brhmaloaka is having differentiations?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, Brāhmaloka is having some kind of differentiations. All Hindu scriptures declare that all relative planes of existence are of names and forms. Names and forms are changing. The changeless principle which is called Brahman is beyond all these planes where names and forms exist. There are differentiations in all planes of relative existence.

DISCIPLE:—If Brahmaloaka also is of relative existence that plane cannot be eternal. It is indeed meaningless to call this plane Brahmaloaka. I thought that this name indicates that the plane of Brahmaloaka is a plane of existence where human souls can remain in meditation on Brahman. Do you think Swamiji that the human souls residing in that plane of existence are not having meditations on the state of Brahman?

SWAMIJI:— It is needless to say that Brahmaloaka is pervaded by Brahman. In fact this

plane of earth is also being pervaded by Brahman. All that is visible and invisible are certainly pervaded by Brahman. Yet we know that we do not experience the existence of Brahman while we are in the plane of earth. We know that this plane of earth is a part of the corporeal body of Brahman who exists as the innermost essence of everything in this cosmos. Similarly we know that Brahmaloaka is the highest part of the astral body of the same principle called Brahman. In that plane of Brahmaloaka (plane of God-consciousness) the soul of man may feel the presence of God in astral state full of divine glory. But Brahman is unmanifested divinity existing beyond all these manifested states of existence. Just as human beings are in search of Brahman while in corporeal bodies, their souls may be searching to have experience of Brahman in that plane of existence also after reaching that state. 'Nethi Nethi' is a process of search for Brahman according to the system of Vedantha. 'Nethi Nethi' means 'not this, not this'. A seeker after Truth who follows the path of knowledge begins his search by taking and analysing one by one different sheaths of the body to see if that is Brahman. When he finds that the external sheath made up of food called Annamaya Kosha is not eternal, he rejects that sheath saying that it is not Brahman. There is an inner sheath called Pranamaya Kosha made

up of vital force. As it is giving strength to this corporeal body and as the man is considered as dead when this vital force leaves the body, the aspirant tries to analyse and to see if the sheath of vital force is really Brahman. He finds that that sheath too is changing and perishable and therefore he rejects that sheath also saying that it is not Brahman. Similarly sheaths of mind and intellect also are rejected as they are of changing nature. Then comes the sheath of consciousness. It is very difficult to understand what is consciousness. Yet the aspirant tries to perceive the state of consciousness which is beyond conception and in the course of his researches he may find that the consciousness is nothing but a reflection of the divinity of Atman (the soul) which is the basis of all other states and developments. This consciousness is the glory of Brahman if it is of cosmic nature. Yet, this consciousness also is rejected as it is only a reflection of the divinity of Spirit Divine. This Spirit is beyond different sheaths and states and it is the state of Brahman, the Absolute. The seeker after Truth gets a vague knowledge about Brahman by following the path of research in this manner and then he is to meditate upon the great dictum "Aham Brahmasmi" meaning "I am Brahman". The goal of that meditation is Brahman indeed. You have heard that the plane of Brahmaloaka is

of God-consciousness and the state there is divine light of knowledge. It is also said that it is a plane of intellect where human souls exist with a body made of intellect only. Those souls remaining in that state of God-consciousness in the sheath of intellect, can realize personal Gods with forms, as personal Gods remain there as individualized beings of divine knowledge. They can have meditations on impersonal Godhood also in a better and clearer manner as that state is ever radiant with divine glory. The name Brahmaloka denotes, the meaning that it is the plane of Brahman. Some people considered that the formless state of God-consciousness prevailing in that plane is Brahman and they called that plane as Brahmaloka, meaning that that plane is the abode of Brahman. Brahman is certainly all these and beyond them all. Chinmandala or the cosmic state of consciousness is beyond the plane of God-consciousness. Brahman, the Absolute is beyond the state of cosmic consciousness. Those souls who reside in the plane of Brahmaloka can meditate upon Brahman, just as we do here, and have higher states of experiences if they were followers of the path of knowledge. Those who follow the path of devotion are satisfied with the realization of personal Gods. It is the state of Brahman that is eternal and it is Brahman alone that is the highest state of beatitude. Till one

reaches that state he will have 'I' consciousness existing in him. Brahman is beyond all vibrations and beyond 'I' consciousness even. That Brahman, the Absolute is our goal.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, I am really desirous of knowing what the purpose of an incarnation is. Is it not enough if we have personal and impersonal Godhoods of Brahmaloka for the benefit of the followers of different faiths?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, it is enough, no doubt, for their worships and meditations. In fact, Brahman as the basic principle of all these visible and invisible universes is enough for the worships and meditations of human beings. But people are of different capacities and modes of thinking and, as such, they want various types of Godhoods for their worships and meditations. Some may be devotees and some others well-versed in philosophies. Devotees want human touch in their deities for worship. Siva, Vishnu, Kali and others are divinities of a higher order. Devotees may worship them with respect and fear. Rama, Krishna, Ramakrishna and such others are human beings whom devotees can love. They had human aspects in their lives. Some of the incarnations of God were wonderful divine manifestations with divine glories, while some others were mere ideal

personalities. These human personalities are of very great help for aspirants as they find the needed divine power, spirit and determination in them for the practice of meditation. They are the best moulds to put our consciousness into, to make it divine. Some aspirants do not need any of those Gods or incarnations as their object of worship or chosen ideal. They select for their meditations other objects such as a flame of light or a glittering star of light of lightning or anything that is wonderfully shining. Now you can understand that both these sets of personal Gods and other objects also are needed to suit different types of aspirants.

DISCIPLE:—Do you mean to say Swamiji, that these forms of Gods are of no importance? Then, why should we meditate upon such forms?

SWAMIJI:—There is no doubt that the form of the object of meditation is not of much importance. It is the state of meditator's consciousness that is of value. Yet, the mind of the meditator may require something gross to perceive, in the beginning. It is very difficult to conceive an object without any form when an aspirant begins to practise concentration and meditation. Those who had practised such meditations in their previous lives and attained realizations of

personal Gods with forms may be able to begin meditations on God without any form. Others are to begin with some gross objects for meditations. If such objects are not accepted in the beginning that aspirant may not be able to perceive properly the impersonal state of God. Now you can understand that the form of God also is of importance for all aspirants in the course of spiritual practices.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, I am not much impressed by this explanation. You say that it is only for the sake of easy conception that we accept personal Gods with forms. Will you kindly tell me why such a process is necessary. Why should we not meditate upon God without any form as Truth eternal. There are various personal Gods with forms like Kali, Vishnu, Siva and others. How could men know what forms they are having? Of course we know that Rama, Krishna, Christ and other incarnations were human beings. I like to hear why these incarnations are to be accepted as objects for our meditations.

SWAMIJI:—It is certainly for easy conception that an aspirant accepts a personal God with form as his ideal. There is another benefit also as I described above. We can love a personality much more than a principle. Our mind will find

it easy to be ever in communion with such a personality with divine qualities. The object of meditation is meant for putting our consciousness into a state of divinity as represented by that object or chosen ideal. In meditation we try to get ourselves absorbed in our object of meditation and thereby attain the state of that object. Now it is clear that a personality is a better object for our meditation as it is easy for us to fix our mind and to concentrate and meditate upon as our beloved ideal. If we accept incarnations or any divine personalities as our chosen ideal, there will be facilities to conceive them as our own. Personal Gods such as Siva, Vishnu and others are divine manifestations indeed. But they are beyond our conception as they are described as all-pervading and at the same time personified in certain forms. These forms are conceived as described by divine powers who are said to be the divinities who revealed all Vedas and Upanishads. After hearing from them, sages meditated upon those forms and got realizations. Thus you will see that they are of divine origin and that they can be meditated upon by aspirants who are devoted to them. The difficulty in conceiving them lies in their super-human nature. Finding that difficulty, ancient sages introduced a system of worship of divine incarnations. These incarnations are human beings although they are

manifested from the divine power whom we call God. These incarnations are not born with accumulated effects of past actions and they are wonderfully divine. Such divinities are our ideals and they are the best moulds to shape our consciousness as divine. You want to know if we can meditate upon the highest principle as Truth Eternal. It is possible only after passing through a course of meditation on some objects with forms. Meditation on objects without forms as Eternal Truth is indeed the highest and most difficult.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, you told me now that those sublime divinities in the form of Vishnu, Siva and others are conceived as directed by divine powers who revealed our Vedas and Upanishads to ancient sages. I am still doubting if it would not be better to meditate upon them before commencing meditation on impersonal Godhood. You have told me that it is necessary to pass through such a course before beginning the highest meditation. Why should we meditate upon human beings? Now I understand that forms of Gods are revealed by divinities only to make our conception of God easy. Instead of meditating upon human beings, would it not be better to meditate upon those sublime divinities like Siva, Vishnu and others with forms as revealed by divine powers?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, forms of God are certainly for our conceptions and meditations. All our scriptures say that God is all-pervading. But there are others who consider that God presides over the Kingdom of God. They believe in a God without any form as existing in Heaven, the highest plane of existence which is described as the Kingdom of God. Hindus alone accept God with form in spite of their conception of God as formless and all-pervading. I am sure that you will take this explanation as confusing. There is a difficulty in conceiving an all-pervading God as having a particular form. The object of introducing such a form is to make it easy for our mind and intellect for perception. The aspirant is directed to begin with the meditation on such a form of God and to have communion with the state and glory represented by that form. You may have heard that one and the same divinity is perceived through different forms of God. Different forms and systems of worships are introduced by ancient sages to lead human souls to that glorious state of Godhood. It is again with the purpose of making easy conceptions and loving attitude that the form and personality of incarnations are accepted as objects of worships as I told you before.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, Sri Ramakrishna is said to be an incarnation of the most sublime divinity.

He lived like an ordinary man of spiritual achievements. Your explanations gave me an impression that such incarnations are the best objects for our worship and meditation. I like to know if I can have the highest attainment or the realization of Brahman by meditating upon Him as He is a manifestation of the highest divinity.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, He incarnated from the highest plane of divine splendour. He attained the highest realization of Hindu conception although He lived like an ordinary man and again practised other religions as well. He did not appear as an incarnation of God with super-human divinity and glory. He was living like an aspirant who practised wonderful spiritual practices and shone as an ideal before His followers who accepted Him as their object of meditation. He became the embodiment of divinity by undergoing all kinds of spiritual practices and by attaining the highest goals of different faiths. You know that He attained the highest Nirvikalpa Samadhi during the period of His practices. That state of Samadhi where the individual becomes one with the cosmic state of Spirit Divine is indeed beyond our conception and beyond all limitations. It is therefore possible to conceive Him as absolute divinity beyond all differentiations. You can now understand that Sri Ramakrishna is not a personality and that

He is a principle. That principle is what we call absolute divinity or universal Godhood. By following Sri Ramakrishna and meditating upon Him as a universal principle the aspirant can, attain the highest realization. If an aspirant conceives Him as a personality and as a great man of realization who lived in the temple of Dakshineswar as a Brahmin priest doing wonderful researches in spiritual science as we read in the literature connected with His life, there is no doubt that he can reach such a personality in the plane of consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—Is it not possible to have such attainments by meditating upon any chosen ideal?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, it is possible to have such high attainments, provided, one is capable of conceiving the deity as having the highest state of attainment during the meditation of the aspirant. In this case it is not depending merely upon the conception of the meditator.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, I could not understand you properly. I think that the meaning of meditation is to mould our consciousness as our ideal on which we meditate.

SWAMIJI:—It is true that the meditator becomes the object of his meditation itself. Suppose you are remembering a friend whom you knew

some time ago. Your mind takes up his form as a result of the past impressions in your mind and thereby you get his remembrance. Similarly the meditator brings up the form and state of the object of his meditation by conceiving the form and state as he has heard and understood. There are two kinds of objects for our consideration now. One is of matter and the other is of spirit. Spirit is without any form and existing in cosmic pervasion. Mind or intellect cannot concentrate and meditate upon any object that is of cosmic nature. There are certain material centres through which our consciousness is getting reflected in a human body. These centres are constituted with pure elements and are of our astral bodies. Intellect is a centre constituted with pure elements of fire and air in the ethereous body made of the pure elements of sky, air, fire and water. Mind is another centre in the astral body and is constituted with pure elements of fire, air and water. Consciousness is a reflected state of the individual soul and is full of electronic substance. When this consciousness is reflected through the above centres of intellect and mind those powers called intellect and mind are getting manifested. Similarly different sense organs are also centres in our astral body and are constituted with pure elements. All our sense organs are centred in the mind and our consciousness reflected through the centre of

mind makes those organs alive. These senses, mind and intellect can perceive only material objects although consciousness is the power that works through all these centres. Now you can understand that our mind or intellect cannot conceive Spirit Divine which is in cosmic pervasion. Meditation is a practice to lift the consciousness to higher and higher centres till the consciousness becomes free from all manifested states of existence and that realization is called super-conscious experience. The aspirant withdraws all his external senses from their objects and then withdraws his mind also from all sense-organs before he begins his practice. You know that he is trying to take away his consciousness from all these external objects by these attempts. Then he tries to fix his mind on the object of meditation and then puts the reflected state of consciousness that is working through the mind in the form of that object. Slowly he gains concentration, and the power of consciousness illuminating the mind takes up the form and state of the object of his meditation. If the object is material, the mind will experience it and have full knowledge about it. If that object is a reflection of consciousness through anything material the consciousness that is shining through the meditator's mind will become one with the object of his meditation. As a result of this union all modifications in the mind of the meditator will be

stilled. The mind of meditator will become inactive at that time as the power of consciousness working through that centre of mind is withdrawn to his intellect. It is the intellect that is having experience of the object of meditation without any modifications in the power of consciousness during deep meditation. In that state the aspirant can be satisfied that he has conquered his mind. This is the highest kind of meditation on any object made up of matter. The form of God is manifested state of Spirit Divine although the astral body of the deity is made up of different kinds of pure elements. It is for the benefit of devotees and followers that the Lord of the universe is manifesting Himself in different forms and personalities. Those who practise spiritual exercises will be able to perceive the form of the object of meditation and dive deep into divinity in and through these material forms. I have already told you that the mind or intellect are incapable of conceiving any object of cosmic pervasion. Brahman, the Absolute is the essence of consciousness and it is all-pervading. If an aspirant is meditating upon Brahman, he will have to conceive infinity during his meditation and that is to be done with his consciousness only. If one is capable of meditating upon the form of his chosen ideal he may try to perceive a halo around the form of the deity. This halo may be expanded

as all-pervading light divine and the form may be conceived as condensed state of the same light. The form may be melted away in that cosmic pervasion of light divine and thereafter the aspirant may continue his meditation on that cosmic light. During the course of this practice the consciousness of the aspirant gets withdrawn from the centre of intellect also and the individual state of that consciousness tries to visualize the cosmic state. This is the highest meditation through our consciousness. By continuing this practice, one may get beyond the state of consciousness also and in that super-conscious state of experience the individual becomes lost in Brahman. This is the highest state of attainment of the realms of the spirit. It is the individual consciousness that is having communion with the cosmic state which is the manifested state or form of Spirit Divine. By meditating upon a form of any deity one gets control over his mind and his consciousness takes up the form of his object of meditation. It is the intellect that is having the experience of the form of the deity. By continuing the meditation with a halo of cosmic pervasion, the intellect also loses its hold on consciousness. But by melting away the form of the deity in that cosmic pervasion the intellect of the aspirant becomes inactive. Thereafter the meditation will be something like an attempt of the individual trying to become cosmic.

I told you that the object of meditation can be treated as sublime consciousness when it is of cosmic pervasion. Sri Ramakrishna is said to be an incarnation from that cosmic state of consciousness or Saguna Brahman. He attained the highest realization of Brahman through the highest experience called Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Again He practised different religions and got realizations of their goals. He found that all these religions were different paths leading to the destination called God. By all these occult experiences He reached a state beyond all differentiations of all kinds. Meditating upon such a personality is certainly helpful to reach a state beyond differentiations. That state is Brahman. Brahman is the essence of consciousness. This Brahman wished a cosmos and it itself became manifested as the cosmos and all that is in it. The soul of man is nothing but a spark of this Brahman. This spark is now wishing to attain higher stages of manifestations during the course of meditations. At last it becomes Brahman, the source of all manifestations. All forms and personalities of Gods are leading the aspirant to such realizations, provided his conception gets expanded as described above. Sri Ramakrishna's life gives us illumination as He passed through all these stages. We have no knowledge if any others have passed through all these practices and experiences. You

can understand that Sri Ramakrishna was a living example for spiritual attainments. Besides having occult experiences of a high order He lived as an oblem of harmony between different faiths although He was an ardent follower of Hinduism. You can see the highest state or principle shining through His life from all these descriptions of His personality.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, am I to understand that an aspirant can attain the highest principle through meditation on the form or personality of Sri Ramakrishna?

SWAMIJI:—No, I told you that one has to begin his meditation on the form of his chosen ideal and end the practice by dissolving the form in the cosmic state of light divine. Just to fix our mind and make it still it is very good to have an object with form in the beginning. But slowly one may dissolve that form in a state of divine light representing consciousness. Thereafter that meditation may be continued till one forgets himself in that state of consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—May I take that the advent of Sri Ramakrishna revealed a wonderful ideal for our worship and meditation? He Himself was a living ideal and we can easily conceive the highest ideal through His life. Will you please describe

the state of His consciousness so that I can have a better conception. You have stated that consciousness alone can conceive and meditate upon any object that is full of consciousness. Therefore I request you to kindly tell me something more about Sri Ramakrishna so that my conception may be expanded.

SWAMIJI:—I have already described that Sri Ramakrishna was manifested from the state of Saguna Brahman. He called that state as the state of Mother Divine. Again by occult practices He became immersed in that power. He lived and acted as directed by Her. The highest Nirvikalpa Samadhi also was bestowed upon Him by that Power. His Mother Divine directed Him to practise different courses of practices as adumbrated in those religions. Thus you will see that Sri Ramakrishna is a common ideal for all. He practised all Yogas during the period when he was an aspirant, but He lived as a devotee even after the highest realization of Nirvikalpa Samadhi as directed by His Mother Divine. He was incarnated from the sublimity of the highest glory of Brahman and as an aspirant He attained the highest pinnacle in the realms of the spirit through realizations. Thereafter He came down from that height just as He came down from the height of glory of Brahman as a divine incarnation.

Now you can see that the sublime state of divinity manifested through His life is the highest principle and that you may conceive that principle in and through His personality. His personality as embodiment of divinity is an ideal worth meditating upon in the beginning. By diving deeper and deeper in the meditation, the aspirant will find that the supreme principle that is the basis of His personality, is the goal of the meditation on Him. In that state of meditation, the form and the personality will vanish and the sublime state of the highest principle will remain. You know that in deep meditation the mind and intellect of the meditator will disappear and the consciousness alone will remain in the state of the object of meditation. By meditating upon the personality of Sri Ramakrishna you will gain Ramakrishna consciousness. You have seen that His personality is nothing but the manifested state of sublime divinity. Conceive Him as the embodiment of that principle or divinity and have communion with His state. If you can do so and have your own consciousness put into the mould of His consciousness by proper conception of the sublimity and glory of His consciousness you will see that you are one with the highest principle. Do you want to hear more about Sri Ramakrishna?

DISCIPLE:—Yes Swamiji, I like to hear more about Him as hearing itself is purifying. For

meditating upon the most sublime state of Sri Ramakrishna I am desirous of knowing all about Him and His spiritual practices.

SWAMIJI:—Certainly, hearing and contemplating on what we have heard are preparations for meditation. I told you that consciousness alone can meditate upon an object that is full of consciousness. But you have to know much about our consciousness if you are to understand the principle underlying my statement. Atman or soul of man is the essence of consciousness, and similarly Paramatman or Brahman (Spirit Divine) is also the essence of consciousness. Brahman is not only the essence of consciousness but it is also ever conscious of its own state. The soul of man, although the essence of consciousness, is centred in 'I'—consciousness. 'I'—consciousness is attached to 'mine'—consciousness and, as such, impure. 'Mine' means the objects of the world, and by associating with the worldly objects individual consciousness gets contaminated and becomes impure. From the highest glorious state of Atman the consciousness of man enters into a state of trance where he will forget the glorious state of Atman. Human consciousness attains the state of the object on which it dwells for the time being. Generally man is immersed in worldly pleasures and the state of his consciousness is identified with worldliness. Unless such a consciousness of

an aspirant is purified there is no possibility of his meditating upon an object that is pure consciousness itself. The process of purifying consists in meditating upon any object as embodiment of divinity. There are various preliminaries to be undergone before systematic practice of meditation on a personality or an embodiment of divinity and they are meant for purifying the mind and intellect of the aspirant. Japa (repetition of the sacred syllable), worship, prayer and all kinds of divine services and austerities are purifying practices. Only after such purification, can one meditate properly on the form of God. By fixing the mind on such an object and remaining still without any modification in the mind, the mind of the aspirant disappears into his intellect which is a higher state of the reflection of his consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, I desire to know if the mind is only a reflection of the consciousness.

SWAMIJ:—Yes, certainly. The mind is only a reflection of the consciousness. I told you that in and through a centre made up of pure elements of sky, air, fire and water in the astral body of a human being, individual consciousness is reflected as mind. By higher meditation and lower Samadhi this reflection of consciousness

through the mind will 'vanish' into the higher centre called intellect which is constituted of the elements of sky, air and fire. That reflection through the centre of the intellect also will vanish into individual consciousness and this individual consciousness will remain in communion with Cosmic Being in higher state of Samadhi (Super-conscious experience). It was through the above centres called mind and intellect that the aspirant was experiencing internal and external universes. Body-consciousness of the aspirant is being experienced by his individual state of consciousness. Even after these reflections of consciousness have vanished there will be the existence of the body-consciousness. That body-consciousness and the individualized state of consciousness will disappear into the cosmic state of consciousness by practising meditations on objects of cosmic pervasion. Impressions gained by all actions and experiences of a human being lie dormant in the individualized state of consciousness. This state of consciousness is what we call 'I' consciousness. By meditating upon God or any other object full of divinity, all tendencies and impressions will be destroyed in course of time. Such a pure consciousness alone can conceive cosmic expansion of Spirit Divine. Spirit is pure consciousness and it is of cosmic pervasion. You can understand that it is essential to begin with the meditation on the form of a

God to enable the aspirant to have easy conception. There are various objects for meditation besides the form of a God and they are mere symbols representing consciousness. They are flame of light; glittering star of light of lightning, globe of light and glory of light of lightning. All these will have a halo of light around them and they are accepted as objects for our meditation as the halo of light can be expanded as cosmic in character. Form of deity also can be conceived as glittering with a halo of light around the form. Thus beginning with a form made of elements one may proceed on with the practice converting that form into condensed state of light having a halo of light around it. This is the state of existence of different Gods in the plane of God-consciousness. If that form of the deity is dissolved into that halo of light after expanding it into cosmic state, the meditator is having the experience of Saguna Brahman or Divine Mother. That state is infinite divine glory indeed. It is clear that a human personality is advantageous to some as they have liking towards the nature and qualities of that personality. You have known that Sri Ramakrishna was born as an embodiment of the glory of the Cosmic Being or Divine Mother. That means that He is the manifested form of Divine Mother or Saguna Brahman. He had declared during His last days that the great

personality who appeared as Rama and later on as Krishna is now Ramakrishna. That declaration has a sort of esoteric meaning. Although He was born as an incarnation of Divine Mother or Saguna Brahman, His declaration proves that the soul of Lord Krishna also has manifested in His being. Swami Vivekananda who got revelation of the sacred syllable impregnated with the power and glory of Sri Ramakrishna declares through the Manthra (syllable) that Sri Ramakrishna is an embodiment of all Gods and Goddesses. We know from the life story of Sri Ramakrishna that different deities on whom He meditated upon entered into Him and became one with Him during the course of his spiritual practices. Not only Hindu Gods, but Christ and Mohammed Nabi also entered into His being. Swami Abhedananda had a vision in which he saw that all incarnations were manifestations from Him only. Sri Mathura Nath Biswas had visions of Mother Divine and Lord Siva from His own personality. Sri Aghormani Devi had an experience that her chosen ideal, baby Krishna was Sri Ramakrishna Himself. In the light of all these declarations and experiences by Himself and various other persons we have to understand that He is the manifested state of the Cosmic Being or Mother Divine who is the origin of all Gods, Goddesses and individual souls. His realizations are unique and His practices also are unheard of in the history of this world. Such a

manifested state of divinity is Sri Ramakrishna. He is the best mould for an aspirant in the beginning.

DISCIPLE:—It is stated in Hindu epics that Rama and Krishna were incarnations of Vishnu. Am I to understand that all deities are manifestations of the glorious power called Divine Mother?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, deities like Siva, Vishnu, Lakshmi, Saraswathi and others are from that glorious state only. All these deities exist in the plane of God-consciousness or Brahmaloaka. Incarnations of God like Rama and Krishna are all manifestations of the glory of Lord Vishnu. Sri Ramakrishna is a manifestation of the glory of Saguna Brahman as I told you before. Lord Vishnu is said to be the protecting power of this universe. He dwells in the plane of God-consciousness as a personality with form in spite of the conception that He is all-pervading. He is the Lord of the plane of God-consciousness and all other planes of existence below that state. He is treated as a wonderful divine power and omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God of the universe. Lord Rama was an incarnation from that state of Vishnu with divine glory to fight and conquer demons. It is again that personality who incarnated as Lord Krishna with fully developed divine powers. Such incarnations are considered

as incarnations of the Lord of Vaikunta and they will have superhuman powers and glories manifested in their lives. Sri Ramakrishna's advent was from the state of cosmic consciousness. All Jeevas or individual souls are also born from that state or Mother Divine. Incarnations are appearing in this world to establish Dharma (righteousness) according to the need of the age as destined by the ordaining power of the cosmos. These incarnations are special manifestations of the Lord of the plane of God-consciousness who is the manifested state of the Cosmic Being. Individual souls are born from Mother Divine, but they pass through various stages of evolution till they become perfect. Each soul is born with past impressions and tendencies as guiding faculties of his life while an incarnation is free of all such faculties. Sri Ramakrishna was born from the state of the Cosmic Being or Saguna Brahman as ordained by the Lord of the universe as absolute divinity. From His birth He was having a divine state of mind and a state of divine trance. From childhood He was of peculiar nature and He used to have His plays also as a divine child. He used to have assembly of children and all of them used to sing God's name and dance. During His school time also He with His friends used to go to a mango grove nearby and act religious dramas. During such dramas the main part used to be

played by this divine child who was then called Gadadhar. Wherever and whenever some Sadhus (Sanyasins) came to that village He used to go there and spend His time with them talking with them and hearing what they said. After returning home He used to narrate all such stories and teachings to His mother and to other ladies of the neighboring houses. He used to visit all sacred temples of the locality with other people of the place and meditate there unlike others. The most wonderful play of that child was that He used to go to a nearby temple in a secluded place of the village, sit there and meditate till late at night. He used to make clay images of Gods and Goddesses and perform worships with His playmates. In such a young age He was bold enough to say that He will not have so-called education if it is not helpful for attaining the goal of life. He called it as mere bread winning education. But He was ever ready to learn whatever He heard from mendicants and Sanyasins. It was this wonderful child that grew up as a wonderful divine personality in later days.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji I would like to hear more about Him. It is indeed a kind of practice, as hearing is the beginning of spiritual practices.

SWAMIJI:—That child was later on known as Gadadhar Chatterjee and He became the Poojari

(one who carries on worship) in Dakshineswara temple on the bank of the river Ganges near Calcutta. It was again a wonderful chapter of His life as it was full of divine characters. He became God-intoxicated and He was ever in a state of divine trance. His state became so very abnormal that people thought that He was mad. He carried on the worship in the temple in an exalted state of mind. He used to talk with the deity and attend on the image of the deity with full conviction that it was alive. He was in a God-intoxicated state during that period and His worship in the temple was unique indeed. At such a young age He became an aspirant ever engaged in spiritual practices without the guidance of an external Guru (teacher). You might have heard that He had the help and guidance of a Bhairava (divine spirit) during that period for His practices. Again there is the mention of the embodiments of sin and divinities in the mind and a fight between them. You know that He was a born divinity without any previous impressions or tendencies and ever after His birth the life was a divine flow full of burning desire to attain God realization. There is no meaning in the statement that there is sin in Him and there was a fight between sin and divinity within His being. You can understand from this statement that He was under the guidance and training of divine

beings during that period. They were teaching Him through symbolical expressions.

DISCIPLE:—Why Swamiji, was He not a human being? Could He not have some touch of sin in him? Probably actions of His young age might have accumulated certain amount of sin and that sin might have left His person at that time. That fight between the embodiments of sin and divinity is enough proof that there was sin even in Sri Ramakrishna.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, there is possibility of having sin to anyone who is engaged in work. Geetha says that no action is possible without contamination of some bad result. You have heard that Sri Ramakrishna suffered from throat disease during His last days. He Himself expressed that it was caused by the sins of His devotees which He took upon Himself. You know that He lived a very pious life doing good to all without distinction of any kind. Yet, He suffered from such a disease at the close of His life because He took upon Himself the sins of many of His devotees and disciples. But in His young age He had not done anything wrong and I do not consider the actions of a child to bring up so much sin. I myself consider that it was only a symbolical fight between two faculties of good and evil to teach Him how an aspirant should fight within

himself to annihilate all that is evil. He was an embodiment of divinity and yet He had to pass through all these processes of evolution to shine as an ideal before all. Anyway, we hear that there were inner powers to guide Him during that period. He went on with the worship in the temple in those days and was ever engaged in spiritual practices when He was free from the temple. He used to get up at night when others were in bed and go to Panchavati (a grove of five kinds of trees) to carry on His spiritual practices. He had no fear in those days that He would be attacked by ghosts or demons. He did not care if it would rain at night or if there would be mist. There was no thought about snakes even, and He was fervently driven to attain the goal without any other consideration. At last He became dispirited for want of realization and decided to sacrifice His life before the image of His chosen ideal. All on a sudden He got a wonderful experience that an effulgent and glorious light was appearing before Him and He fell down in a superconscious state. That was His first realization of a higher order. Before that He had some such experiences on two or three occasions. One of them was a wonderful experience. One day while He was walking along a narrow ridge in the paddy fields He looked up and saw a beautiful thunder-cloud and a flight of snow-white cranes.

flying underneath. Some wonderful idea might have been the result of that sight as He fell down and was unconscious for a long time.

DISCIPLE—Swamiji, what is the fun of falling down on seeing a row of birds beneath the dark blue sky?

SWAMIJI:—Dark blue sky represents infinity or Brahman. The silvery ray in the middle seen as a result of the flight of white birds is the manifested state of Godhood. Probably that young boy might have got the idea of unmanifested Brahman becoming manifested somehow. Who can understand the state of His divinity in those days! One day He acted the part of Lord Siva in a drama. It was a wonderful phenomenon that He sank into deep Samadhi there and remained in that state throughout that night. When He identified Himself with Lord Siva who is conceived as the embodiment of Yoga and Samadhi He became lost in that state. Such a wonderful state was manifested in His life from His childhood. After the first experience stated above, He wanted to have such experiences whenever He desired. He went on with the struggle thereafter also, although the pang for God-realization continued in a controlled manner. All these wonderful practices and realizations were probably under the guidance of inner guides as stated above.

DISCIPLE:—Is it possible to have guidance and instructions from such divinities in this plane? I have heard that Nachikethas went to Yama and had instructions there. But on this plane of earth can we believe that these things can take place?

SWAMIJI:—Why not? You might have heard that Paodavas got instructions from Yakshas (wonderful divinities) while they were wandering in forests. Lord Christ and many others also are said to have had such messages from divine beings.

DISCIPLE:—Who are these Yakshas, Swamiji? It is said that there are Yakshas and Bhairavas in a higher state of existence. I would like to hear who they are.

SWAMIJI:—There are Yakshas in different planes of existence. The lowest among them reside in the upper part of Bhavarloka. Bhavarloka is a plane of existence beyond this earth and the corporeal universe. It is an ethereal plane of existence where departed souls exist. These Yakshas reside in the uppermost sphere in that plane and Bhairavas also reside just beyond that. Then there are Yakshas residing in the higher planes of existence like Tapoloka and Brahmalo (plane of God-consciousness and the plane below that). In other planes also

there are divinities of the same type known as Devaduthas or angels. These divinities are managing the affairs of the universe. God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent power and these are divinities existing as glories of the same power. There are eternal beings among them who conduct divine duties in different planes. At times, there appear such divinities through the wish of the power whom we call God or Mother Divine or Saguna Brahman. You might have heard of a wonderful Yaksha about whom Kenopauishad speaks. That kind of Yakshas appear for special purposes by divine will. In the life of Sri Ramakrishna you will see that Mother Divine appeared before Him and also before His Guru (preceptor) Thothapuri for such special purposes. These divinities appeared before them to teach, rectify and instruct them. Thothapuri was a non-believer in personal Gods. Just to teach him that God can be with or without personality, one divine power appeared before him.

DISCIPLE:—Am I to understand that all our spiritual realizations are like the one that Sri Thothapuri got?

SWAMIJI:—It is so. Do you think the all-pervading God will appear before us and give us realizations? Sri Ramakrishna used to get directions from His Mother Divine and He used to talk

with Her. That does not mean that the power whom we call God or Mother Divine was seated within Him. That Cosmic Being cannot be centred in an individual. First of all you are to know what is the difference between God and man. God is the Cosmic Being having all-pervading consciousness with no individualized centre of consciousness while the soul of man is a centre in that Cosmic Being with an individualized state of consciousness. This individualized 'I' consciousness is getting identified with three kinds of bodies such as causal body, astral body and corporeal body. Instead of having divine consciousness, being identified with Brahman, that centre of 'I' ness is having body-consciousness being identified with all or any of the above three kinds of bodies in every living being in any plane of existence. Individual soul is only a centre having 'I' consciousness in the state of cosmic consciousness and that consciousness is evolved as human being passing through various stages of life in our plane of earth. This earth is a part of the grossest external universe where the lowest manifestations reside as a result of the vibrations in the cosmic state of consciousness. You will understand from all these descriptions that the human soul is only a spark in the Cosmic Being and that the human consciousness is only a part and parcel of the cosmic consciousness. Similarly divine beings also are manifesta-

tions from that cosmic state of consciousness. There are such divinities residing in different planes of existence to carry on the duties of those planes. According to the state and glory of each plane, these divinities exist and they manifest their powers and glories. The plane of Vaikunta is of God-consciousness and those eternal divinities residing there are full of divine glories and powers. It is these divinities that give us God-realizations as they themselves are glories and powers of the Lord of that plane. It is therefore clear that such a divine power might have been talking with Sri Ramakrishna and guiding Him during the period of His spiritual practices. You can very well understand that one personal God cannot run about to give realizations to thousands of aspirants of this world. These realizations are not mere experiences resulting from continuous and constant moulding of our own consciousness although it is stated that the object of meditation is a mould to shape our own consciousness. During the course of our attempt at moulding our consciousness as our chosen ideal, the Cosmic Being appears and gives us realizations in the forms and states of our conception. Whenever there is a need it is through these divinities that the Cosmic Being appears before the aspirant in the form and glory of his chosen ideal. Young Gadadhar was being guided by His Mother Divine in a wonder-

ful manner. He was taught as to how to do spiritual practices and He was given directions for His future practices of different methods of Hinduism and also different faiths and religions. One by one He practised all known paths of different sects and different religions as directed by that wonderful Power Divine. He got the highest realizations in all paths practised by Him and He attained also the highest Nirvikalpa state of Samadhi where there is no time, space and causation. It is a state beyond all conceptions, differentiations and consciousness. After attaining that state where there is no differentiation, He came down and practised other religions also to find out what their goals are. He proclaimed at last that they are all paths to the same goal. The principle which is called God by Christians, Allah by Muslims, Brahman by Hindus and Enlightenment by Buddhists is the same divinity which is the essence of sublime consciousness. Thus you can see that Sri Ramakrishna was the embodiment of all religions and all religious goals of this world. He was the essence of all faiths and principles and He was the embodiment of all Gods and Goddesses of different sects and religions as He found all of them approaching, entering and disappearing into Him. Sri Ramakrishna was manifested form of the highest plane of divinity and after taking birth as an ordinary human being He underwent

all kinds of spiritual practices and attained that highest state in Samadhi. Yet He came down and lived like an ordinary devotee of Mother Divine to show an ideal before this world. He used to say that man has to live as a devotee of God as long as he is in a human body. He lived as a devotee of Mother Divine who is divine knowledge and bliss only and He became so much identified with divinity that His material body also became condensed divinity. He could not tolerate the association of worldly minded people and could not touch food and other articles touched by such people.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, why was He so very particular about food? Was He not a knower of Brahman? Is it not proper for such a great soul to treat everything as Brahman?

SWAMIJI:—Don't You know from the above descriptions that His life was manifested state of sublime divinity? No worldliness can approach that state. I will tell you what is that divinity of the highest order. The basic principle which we call Spirit Divine is the substratum of everything and the essence of sublime divinity and supreme knowledge. It is the source of all vibrations. Vibrated state of that Divinity is called Mother Divine having cosmic state of consciousness

Visible and invisible universes exist in this state of consciousness. Sri Ramakrishna is an embodiment of this state of consciousness or Mother Divine as we have already described. He could not identify himself with any other state contaminated with material vibrations. Vibrated state of Spirit Divine is called Mother Divine. This vibration in Spirit takes place by its own will.

DISCIPLE:—How is it possible to understand that the Spirit Divine free of all vibrations became vibrant? I do not understand how that principle became wishful and when that wish took place.

SWAMIJI:—I do not think that there is any beginning for this cosmos. It is existing in eternity. Vibrant state of this Spirit Divine also is existing eternally. You can now understand that this wish of Brahman is always in Brahman as the cause for eternal vibrations. There was no particular period when this vibration originated and as such this wish also was not originated at a particular time. Brahman and its wish are existing eternally.

DISCIPLE:—If that is so what is the meaning of the declaration that there is a dissolution for this universe?

SWAMIJI:—There is no dissolution for this cosmos as a whole at any time. Partial dissolution

may take place at intervals and similar manifestation also may take place. I told you that the visible and invisible universes are manifested from the Cosmic Being or Mother Divine. Whatever is manifested may disappear into the state from where it is originated. You can understand from my descriptions that the Spirit Divine and the vibrant state of that Spirit are existing in eternity. Vibration produces light and the state of light is considered as knowledge. Cosmic state of light is considered as cosmic consciousness and that is the manifested state of the Cosmic Being. All souls, all Gods and all visible and invisible universes are born from this manifested state of the Cosmic Being only. Dissolution means disappearance into this cosmic state. There is no total annihilation of the whole cosmos at any time. Therefore there is no occasion to manifest a new will in the cosmic state of consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—I do not very well understand how this vibration takes place. The sublime state of Divinity called basic principle or Brahman is beyond all vibrations. That eternal principle in a vibrant condition exists as Cosmic Being in eternity as manifested state of Spirit Divine. This state is called Saguna Brahman by Hindus. Others' conception of Godhood is that God is existing in the Kingdom of God. He is having divine power

and glory and He is the Creator of this cosmos and all that is in it.

DISCIPLE:—Am I to understand that this cosmic state of existence is the Kingdom of God? I understood from the description of Swamiji that there are no differentiations in that state of existence. Difference in the conception of Godhood and also different religions and faiths cannot exist in that state. I have understood that the followers of different faiths and religions will have the experience of their Gods in the Kingdom of God. Am I to understand that these differences exist in this plane of corporeal existence only?

SWAMIJI:—Cosmic state of existence indeed is the Kingdom of God. But there is a lower state where there will be the manifested state of God consciousness. Generally that state is called the Kingdom of God. Hindus call that state as Brahmaloaka or Vaikunta; others call that state as Heaven or the Kingdom of God. There are different spheres for the followers of different faiths and religions in that state and the souls reaching that state by following different religions experience the state of Godhood according to their conceptions.

DISCIPLE:—I am in a confused state. Am I to understand that the existence of God depends

upon our conception? Does it mean that God does not exist for those who do not believe in the existence of a God? If God is to give us experience as we conceive Him in this plane of earth He may establish His non-existence to those who consider that there is no such entity called God. I desire to know if there is the existence of any power called God.

SWAMIJI:—The existence of God does not depend upon our conception. You know that a blind man does not see that the sun is existing. That means that he has no conception about the form or state of the sun. Although he has no conception or knowledge about the sun, it does not affect the existence of the sun. Similarly you or I may not believe in the existence of God. But our disbelief does not affect God in any way. All these that we see and experience are manifestations of the glories of God. God exists in sublime glory unaffected by our faith in Him. God is a divine Power with wonderful glory existing in eternity. He may give us experience in the form or state as we conceive Him. This kind of experience is gained in the state of God-consciousness only. Manifested state and form of God exist in this plane as conceived by followers from beginningless past. Beyond that state there is the existence of Cosmic Being as Spirit Divine mani-

festing wonderful divine light of knowledge. This light is called cosmic consciousness full of electrons and protons with no differentiations of any kind. This all-pervasiveness of the light of lightning is the form of Cosmic Being and this ought to be the conception about God for all without the distinction of faiths and religions.

DISCIPLE:—How is it that the followers of different religions and faiths are having different conceptions of God?

SWAMIJI:—Generally divine powers or angels reveal the states and forms of God to great sages and prophets, and they, in their turn, declare what they heard for the good of their followers. Most of the religions are following prophets or messengers of God as they are considered to be the founders of those religions. It is only Hinduism that is following various paths as revealed by different sages. Hinduism is not founded by a single individual. Innumerable sages had revelations in the past and all of them together is called Vedas. These Vedas are treated as having divine origin and existing in eternity. But sages get revelations according to the needs of the time and place and as such they may appear as speaking of different truths. The wonder of wonders is that there appear great personalities to make harmony between varying views when there is the need for

such an adjustment. In ancient India there was a great soul called Vyasa who made such adjustment by harmonising different views and dividing Vedic literature and later on we can see that Lord Krishna also had tried to harmonise between different faiths existing in that age. Sri Ramakrishna was born to establish this harmony between different religions from the highest state of existence where there is no differentiation. That wonderful power called God is manifesting in our plane of earth to make such adjustments according to the need of the time. These adjustments lead human society towards the ultimate goal which is unity in and through all these diversities. Vibrant state of Brahman is this oneness or unity behind all diversities and this state is called Cosmic Being or God. Spirit Divine exists as the basis for all these vibrations and manifestations. That wonderful state is beyond all our conceptions.

DISCIPLE:—The basic principle is Brahman and the manifested state also is Brahman. What is the difference between them?

SWAMI:—There are differences between these states of Brahman although one and the same principle appears as two. Brahman, the Absolute, is existence in-itself and it is itself getting vibrated by its own will. This will of Brahman produces a wonderful Power Divine

that causes vibration. This Power Divine is called Para Sakthi. The state of Para Sakthi is the union between spirit and matter. This state of matter is called Moolaprakriti by ancient sages and neutron by modern scientists. Vibrant state of spirit causes vibrations in this state of matter and these vibrations produce electrons and protons of ethereal character. This ethereal electronic state is the source of all powers. The unmanifested Spirit Divine is getting thus manifested as divinity full of glories and wonderful powers. It is from this divine glory of that state that Sri Ramakrishna was incarnated.

DISCIPLE:—Swami, I understand that all souls are manifested from that state only. How can I conceive the difference in the divine states of Sri Ramakrishna and others?

SWAMI:—All are potentially divine. Sri Ramakrishna was a special manifestation from that sublime divinity to make adjustments according to the need of this age. He is being followed by thousands of people all over this world. He has become the chosen ideal to many of His followers. There was the need of having a wonderful manifestation of divinity and unalloyed purity to shine as an ideal before the followers. The life of Sri Ramakrishna was a wonderful manifestation of divinity while others are born with

tendencies and impressions of various lives. Others are also parts and parcels of the Cosmic Being, but being contaminated by impressions and tendencies of this world, the sublime state of divinity that is the nature of individual soul is not getting manifested.

DISCIPLE:—The soul of man being a spark of the Cosmic Being ought to be divine in character. How could it become polluted after it was manifested from that state of divinity?

SWAMIJI:—It is true that the individual soul is only a spark of the Cosmic Being who is the manifested state of Spirit Divine. It is called vibrant state of Spirit or Saguna Brahman. This state of Spirit Divine is called Siva Sakthi union (spirit and matter in union). Siva is vibrant state of the spirit and Sakthi is the wonderful Divine Power developed from vibrated state of Spirit Divine. This Power Divine is the source of all these universes and it is called Cosmic Being. Due to vibration in the spirit, the same spirit is appearing as Power Divine developing an ununderstandable power called Moolaprakrithi which is the source of everything material. The soul of this Power Divine or the Cosmic Being is indeed Siva or the Spirit in vibrant state. The same spirit is, called Brahman when it is beyond all vibrations. Sakthi or Power Divine is the manifested state of divine

glory, power and knowledge and is full of divine bliss. It is from this Power Divine that all personal and impersonal Gods, individual souls and all material powers and objects are born. This Divine Power is called Mother of the universe. Sri Ramakrishna is a manifestation of that wonderful Power Divine as declared by Him. All souls are born from such a wonderful state are of divinity and existing from the beginningless past. There are some who believe that there was no beginning for this cosmos. They say that the cosmos and all the souls and Gods are existing as glories of the Cosmic Being in eternity. According to their conceptions, individualized state of the soul is existing from beginningless past, but each individual is free to become Brahman after passing through the course of evolution. Spiritual practices are meant to achieve this evolution by way of individual becoming cosmic. Some others believe that this cosmos and all the souls are mere creations of God. Their conception is that the soul of man may attain the Kingdom of God and eternal happiness if he lives in this world as ordained by God. Those who do not obey the command of God will be doomed to perish in hell. They do not believe in rebirth after death. This conception may be that God is playing by creating souls by His will, that He is directing them to live as commanded by Him, that He is giving

salvation to those who obey the commandments and that He is destroying those who do not obey Him. It is a mystery that Lord Buddha declared that there is no existence of a soul in man although He believes in the transmigration of the man who is more individualized consciousness. Hindus alone consider that there is a soul in man existing from the beginningless past and that the soul can evolve as Brahman, the Absolute. These souls are existing from beginningless past as stated above, as the glory of the Mother Divine and as such there is no question of getting polluted in the beginning. If there is a dissolution for this cosmos or a part thereof all individual souls and personal Gods connected with that part of the cosmos will disappear into the Cosmic Being till the next cycle begins. Contractions and expansions of the Cosmic Being are considered to be different cycles and dissolutions of the cosmos. Each soul, although potentially divine is polluted with impressions and tendencies of the actions of innumerable lives. Sri Ramakrishna being a special manifestation of the Mother of the universe who is the manifested state of divinity was unalloyed divinity and purity of the highest order.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, your talk about Sri Ramakrishna is inspiring and instructive. Kindly describe His personality so that I can have clear perception about His state.

SWAMIJI:—Sri Ramakrishna lived whatever He taught others to live and put into practice all His teachings before He gave instructions to His devotees. Renunciation of lust and gold was one of His teachings. He was an embodiment of renunciation. Although He was a married man as He was to show ideal for householders also, He had no touch of desire for sexual happiness. His partner, Sri Saradamani Devi was another wonder in religious history. She became the embodiment of pristine purity and divinity by His association. We have heard of Brahma Vadinis (Knowers of Brahman) like Leclavathi, Gargi, and Mythreyi of Vedic period in India. But they did not shine as ideals before the world although they were ladies having knowledge about Brahman. This illiterate lady of a village in Bengal is now worshipped by various classes of people all over this world. There is a wonderful change brought about by Her life in the history of this world. Among Hindus there was no monastic order or institution for young women as we see among Christians. The life of this wonderful woman of Bengal became the lighthouse to show light in the field of religion. Monastic institutions upholding noble ideals, as lived and taught by that wonderful woman, are growing in Her name among Hindus now. Swami Vivekananda desired to establish such a monastery on the banks of

the Ganges while he was alive, but he could not carry out that work as desired by him as he did not live long. His desire is being fulfilled now not only in Calcutta, but in other places also. All these wonderful adjustments were needed in this world and to achieve such adjustments the most sublime divinity itself manifested as Sri Ramakrishna. The Lord of Vaikunta is the lord of all the lower planes including this plane of our earth. Divine incarnations are treated as manifestations of the Lord of Vaikunta or the plane of God-consciousness who is called by Hindus as Lord Vishnu. That plane of God-consciousness is of differentiations of name, form, sect and religion as I have described. There are different Gods with or without forms existing in that state as conceived by the followers of different faiths and religions. The need of this age is a renaissance resulting in harmony between different religions and faiths and such a new development is to take place from the cosmic state of consciousness which is beyond the state of God-consciousness as conceived by different religions. Sri Ramakrishna's advent was from that cosmic state of consciousness beyond all differentiations. But the most wonderful divine manifestation, Lord Krishna who made such a renaissance thousands of years ago resulting in a kind of harmony between the religions and faiths which existed at that age also manifest-

sted in the life of Sri Ramakrishna to achieve this harmony. Sri Ramakrishna although born as a Hindu practised all religions and attained the highest goals declared by each of them. He declared before this world that all religions are paths to the same goal which is called God, Lord, Allah or Brahman. He was manifested from the state of Cosmic Being or Mother Divine and He lived, immersed in that state by spiritual practices. It is a wonder to think that His field of life also was a temple dedicated to Mother Divine and the origin of the temple itself was signifying future adjustments. A rich lady of Calcutta who belonged to a community considered as low class by Hindus, decided to go on a pilgrimage to Banares and other places, spending a large amount of money. She was ordained by Mother Divine to build a new temple on the bank of the Ganges as Her residence, instead of spending money for pilgrimage. She was told that the purpose of her life was to be served in such a way. No one knew the significance of this divine ordination. Pilgrimage was considered from time immemorial, to be one of the most sacred acts to purify one's own life. Construction of new temples and consecrating them in the name of God is also a sacred act of self-purification. But we can see an adjustment according to the need of this age when we look into the benevolent

nature of the divine service in constructing a new temple. Thousands and thousands will be blessed by visiting the temple and worshipping Mother Divine who is beyond all differentiations. You know that Christians, Muslims and others also used to visit this temple, while Sri Ramakrishna was alive. Against the prevailing customs of the country this new temple was built by a low class woman and that was another significance showing future adjustments. This temple with divine origin as described above was built and the consecration ceremony took place in the presence of the manifested form of Mother Divine whom we call Sri Ramakrishna. That became the arena of His divine play as we see from His life. Now that place is the world-renowned place of pilgrimage for all, without the distinction of caste, creed or colour. Thus we can see that the temple of Dakshineswar is the first place where the modern developments for religious renaissance took place in India. Sri Ramakrishna who was the manifested form of Mother Divine lived in the precincts of Dakshinaswar temple, ever in communion with that wonderful Power Divine and also having Her realisations and contact throughout His life. The state of Mother Divine is constant Samadhi as there is only cosmic state of consciousness in Her plane of existence and Sri Ramakrishna although manifested state of Mother Divine was

seen ever in a wonderful state of Divine trance and ecstasy and frequent Samadhis. He attained the highest Nirvikalpa Samadhi also where there is no existence of any consciousness other than Brahman. That is really the state of Divine Mother in Her exalted state as Parasakthi.

DISCIPLE:— I have heard that Swami Vivekananda was brought down by Sri Ramakrishna from the highest state of divine glory. Even in that plane, Sri Ramakrishna saw a few individuals as existing. I shall be exceedingly delighted to know what this plane is and how those souls could remain there. From His talks I gather that Swami Vivekananda was Nara Brahmarshi. But He did not mention who the others were.

SWAMIJI:— The highest state is Parasakthi Mandala (the state where spirit begins vibrating) where there is the realization of Brahman only. But, you may understand that there is no distinction between Parasakthi and Chitsakthi as both these aspects are vibrant states of Brahman only. Vibration begins at the state of Parasakthi and becomes fully vibrated in the next state called Chitsakthi.

DISCIPLE:— I consider that Parasakthi is not all-pervading. I have known that Chitsakthi

is all-pervading. I do not get clear ideas about all these different states. Will you kindly enlighten me on these topics?

SWAMIJI:— Parasakthi is Power Divine with absolute Brahman-consciousness. That is the state where unmanifested Brahman gets manifested state of divinity. Brahman, the Absolute, the sublime divinity and existence infinitum is the basic principle and when it begins to get vibrated there appears a wonderful divine power called Parasakthi. That state is treated as Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute. Individual souls who reach that state become immersed in Brahman in very deep Samadhi.

DISCIPLE:— If that is so, the individual existence of those souls ought to get merged in Brahman. How could Sri Ramakrishna see a few individuals shining in that state?

SWAMIJI:— Due to the will of the Cosmic Being individualities of certain divine souls are kept up for the good of this world. You have heard that Sri Ramakrishna had the highest experience of Nirvikalpa Samadhi during the course of His spiritual practices. One who goes to that state of Samadhi cannot come down to normal consciousness of an individual, just as a drop of water cannot be taken back after it falls into the

ocean. His Mother Divine maintained a slight ego-consciousness in Him while He remained in that state of Samadhi. He Himself told this fact later on to His disciples. Swami Vivekananda was remaining in such an exalted state in that plane of sublime divinity and he was brought down by Sri Ramakrishna for carrying on the work of adjustments needed at this age and to bring up renaissance establishing harmony between sects and religions, and material science and spiritual science. You have heard of the great sage Suka about whom Upanishads speak of. You have also heard of the sage Narayana who was an associate or disciple of the sage Nara. You might know that there was a sage named Mandukya, famous for his knowledge, in ancient India. These great souls are no doubt, highly realized persons who may keep up their individuality, to come again to this plane of earth to make adjustments according to the need of the time. Sri Ramakrishna declared that there is the aspect of Sakthi in Him and that there is the other aspect of Siva in Swami Vivekananda. Sakthi means Power Divine and Siva means Knowledge Divine. Knowledge leads the soul of man to the state of liberation and therefore it is stated in Hindu scriptures that Siva, the embodiment of knowledge is the giver of salvation. In the plane of divine consciousness which is the vibrant state of Brahman there is divine light of knowledge and bliss.

only. The most exalted state in that plane is the abode of Parasakthi. Sri Ramakrishna saw these great souls remaining there as brilliant personalities as they are embodiments of knowledge only. So they are treated as divinities appearing from Lord Siva. Sri Ramakrishna who was the embodiment of Mother Divine had to bring Narendra to help Him in His play.

DISCIPLE:—Siva is divine knowledge, and Swami Vivekananda being an embodiment of knowledge I can understand that he was a manifested glory of Siva. Divine Mother is also knowledge divine as I understand from you. But I find that Sri Ramakrishna was instructing His devotees to follow the path of devotion while Swamiji was declaring that knowledge about Brahman alone will solve the problem of this world. Will you kindly make me enlightened so that I can understand the difference between their ideals.

SWAMIJI:—You know that Mother Divine is the source of everything. Not only knowledge but all glorious paths and other divine glories also are from Her only. You know from the life of Sri Ramakrishna that He was a Yogi, a Jnani and a devotee as well. Siva is the king of Yogis while Mother Divine is the power of Yogis. Siva is knowledge divine while Mother is the light of knowledge. But Mother Divine, the embodiment

of divinity is the Mother of all that is visible and invisible, in this universe. In human life the most loving treatment we get is from our mother and the most unselfish love we possess is towards our mother. Love of a son to his mother is most pure indeed. Pure love towards God is what we call devotion. Sri Ramakrishna's devotion towards Mother Divine appeared to be equal to or even more than His love towards His own mother in this world. Divine Mother's love towards Him was unique and wonderfully divine. From all these facts you can understand that Mother Divine is the origin of the path of devotion in spiritual practices. There was a conception among the sages of India that the path of devotion will not lead a human soul to Kaivalya or the state of liberation from death and birth. They were of opinion that the path of devotion will lead a human soul to the plane of God-consciousness where the human soul can have the realization of the personal God of his conception. It was true in a way as the followers of that path were narrow-minded and begot in their conception of Godhood and in turn they also thought that the path of knowledge is dry and useless. Sri Ramakrishna revealed a path of devotion that will lead one to knowledge divine. We know that God is the essence of divine knowledge. One who approaches Him will have knowledge manifested from

Him if his conception about God is illuminating. Sri Ramakrishna conceived Mother Divine as embodiment of knowledge only. His conception about Mother was that She was beyond all differentiations and personalities and He used to say that the manifested state of Spirit Divine was His Mother Divine. You know that an aspirant having such a conception about his chosen ideal will get sublime knowledge manifested in him as a result of realizations. I have made it clear that both of them were manifested from that state to show different paths leading to the same goal.

DISCIPLE:—Is there any difference between the plane of God-consciousness and the plane of cosmic consciousness? I am desirous of knowing the difference between the Godhoods manifested in the plane of God-consciousness and the plane of cosmic consciousness.

SWAMIJI:—The plane of God-consciousness is an elemental plane where pure elements of sky, air and fire are vibrating. You know that the soul of man is the essence of consciousness only. Souls remaining in that plane of existence will have the consciousness reflected through the vibrant state of the plane, full of these elements. The nature of vibrations in this plane is enlightening and it is inspiring and enthrilling with joy. God-consciousness shining in that plane is of such

glories and it is said that the nature of God is to shine manifesting divinity and divine qualities only.

DISCIPLE:—If divine qualities alone belong to God, is there a devil existing manifesting devilish qualities?

SWAMIJI:—God is beyond everything. He is unaffected by both good and bad qualities. You have the experience of lamps spreading light reflecting the colour of their shades or chimneys. Similarly sublime divinity of Spirit Divine is manifested through vibrant states of different elements. Fire element is predominant in the plane of God-consciousness and as such, the vibration in that plane is pure and divine. Fire is the purest and purifying element as you see in this plane of earth. Water although considered as purifying, there is the possibility of getting contaminations in it. All planes below the plane of God-consciousness or Brahmaloaka are having some kind of influence of water elements. The plane just above our earth is having the influence of earth elements also. Divinity manifested through the vibrant states in these planes of existence will be of varying degrees. Now you can understand that the Godhood of the plane of God-consciousness is the highest and thrilling with purity, divinity, joy and knowledge. It is the contamination of worldliness that makes

devilishness appearing in any person or place. There is no devil existing anywhere as an embodiment of all devilish qualities. The state of cosmic consciousness is not elemental and it is full of electrons and protons of ethereal character. Powers working in that state are not atomic but are electronic in cosmic pervasion. Divinity manifested through such a state is supremely divine and all-embracing in character. There is no differentiation there and as such there is no conception of good or bad in that state. The vibration there, is full of knowledge and bliss only. You might have read a book on Chandi which describes glories of Mother Divine. The divinity of Mother Divine is glorified in it in a wonderful manner. She is described as the power residing in all that is good and bad in the universe and yet She is described as Spirit Divine. This is the real state of the Godhood in the cosmic state of consciousness. Now you will see that the lowest plane of earth is a mixture of good and bad in equal proportion. Those who practise spiritual exercises to get rid of bad qualities will slowly advance and attain the state of God-consciousness where there will be nothing bad existing. Cosmic state is beyond both good and bad, and Brahman, the Absolute is beyond conception.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, you have stated that Sri Ramakrishna was a manifestation of Divine

Mother in whom Jnana, Yoga and devotion find unity. But you have not mentioned anything about the path of Karma or work. Was He against the path of Karma?

SWAMIJI:—No, not at all. He was always engaged in the work of enlightening others, how to attain the goal of human life. He underwent all kinds of spiritual practices and attained the goals of all paths, faiths and religions. He found that different faiths and religions are only different paths leading to the same goal. He declared this truth before the world and preached and taught those who came to Him in search of peace and blessedness. Preaching about God was His work and that is the real Karma Yoga. That kind of Karma Yoga is not suited to all people of this world. Finding this difficulty Swami Vivekananda, the foremost disciple of Sri Ramakrishna introduced a path of Karma Yoga suited to this age. His method was a new one and that was to see God in all human beings and to serve them considering that it is a service to God. Sri Ramakrishna gave enlightenment in this service of man and Swami Vivekananda introduced such service in a systematic manner as you see now working through different centres in India.

DISCIPLE:—Seeing God in every being seems to be a practice in the path of knowledge. Is it not so, Swamiji?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, it is certainly a practice in the path of knowledge. God is to be seen as residing in all living beings, according to the path of devotion as well. Karma Yoga is to be treated as part of both, the path of knowledge and the path of devotion. Purity of internal organs is needed in both these paths. Karma Yoga as a spiritual practice is meant for purifying the corporeal, astral and causal bodies of an aspirant. You know God will be shining in a pure heart only. Sri Ramakrishna was engaged in giving spiritual instructions throughout His life and as such you can understand that He was a combination of all paths and Yogas. You might have heard that He insisted on feeding and clothing a number of poor people while He was on His way to Banarès. From this action of Sri Ramakrishna there has been a wonderful growth of service in this land of ours. Serving the poor in various ways as a service to the Lord is the motto of the movement that has grown in India in the name of Sri Ramakrishna. You have to try to see the soul of man as God or Brahman both in the path of devotion and also in the path of knowledge.

SPIRIT AND MATTER

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, Sri Ramakrishna is said to be an incarnation from the most wonderful sublime state of divinity. Is it the state of Spirit Divine or Brahman? All our scriptures tell us that Brahman is unknowable, inconceivable and inexpressible. Is it not better to consider that a principle that is inconceivable is not existing?

SWAMIJI:—No, that state is not Brahman. There is a principle called Spirit Divine or Brahman existing as the basis of all these visible and invisible universes. It is stated in the Vedas of Hindus that this principle is absolute consciousness only. It is the essence of consciousness and in fact, the cause of all our understanding. Vibrant state of that principle is called Cosmic Being with cosmic state of consciousness in the macrocosm. Vedantha calls this state as Saguna Brahman. Individual soul with individual consciousness in the microcosm is a glory of this Cosmic Being. It is needless to say that the vibrant state of Spirit Divine is in no way different from that Spirit, free of all vibrations. But vibration makes the unmanifested state of Spirit manifested, so that its existence can be perceived. Wonderful divine powers are manifested as a result of these vibrations. According to Vedantha, an illusory power called Mahamaya is manifested from this vibrant state.

of Spirit or Saguna Brahman. This Mahamaya consists of two kinds of powers called Avarna and Vikshepa, of veiling and projecting nature. Modern science treats these powers as negative and positive or electrons and protons. Anyway Avarna or veiling power hides the real nature of the Spirit and Vikshepa or projecting power makes all these universes manifested from it. Due to vibrations in the state of Saguna Brahman, different elemental powers and fine elements and also quintupled elements are manifested from that state during the process of developments. This universe and all that we see here are developments from all these elements. According to Thantric system (system of Mother worship) the conception is that the vibrant state of Spirit Divine is Mother Divine. Brahman exists as the soul of everything and by its own will, it itself became vibrant. The state of Brahman where vibration originates is called Parasakthi and the state where vibration develops to its maximum limit is called Chitsakthi or Mother Divine by them. The state of Parasakthi is a union of spirit and matter or Siva and Sakthi. That means, a wonderful power called Moolaprakrithi is developed and is in union with Siva as a result of the vibrations in spirit. This Moolaprakrithi is known by scientists as neutron although they have not yet found out the Spirit which is the basis of even the most wonderful substance

called neutron. Vibration in the spirit brings out light and that light is treated as divine knowledge. Siva is said to be the embodiment of divinity and knowledge. The momentum of the vibration brings up wonderful powers of different kinds. The most exalted state is called Parasakthi which is a state of union of spirit and matter. Vibration originated in spirit brings out a wonderful power called Moolaprakrithi or neutron and this power or matter also becomes vibrant during the process of developments. Electrons and protons are the developments from the substance known as neutron and they are also in vibrant state. Different kinds of powers develop from this vibrant state of spirit and matter in union.

DISCIPLE:—Am I to understand that Siva is the name of Spirit Divine that is in union with matter?

SWAMIJI:—Siva means blessedness or beatitude. That is the state of spirit beyond all vibrations. But the worshippers of Lord Siva and also Mother Divine conceive Siva as a personality and similarly Mother Divine also is treated as another personality. I have told you that devotion is possible only if a personality is perceived symbolizing principles. Siva is the principle known as vibrant state of Spirit Divine and Sakthi is the manifested state of its glory. Electrons and

protons are manifested glories in the state where spirit and matter becomes vibrant and that state is called Vidyunmandala by ancient sages. Vidyunmandala means electronic plane. That plane is treated as the plane of the Mother of the universe or the Cosmic Being, as all these visible and invisible universes and all souls and Gods are manifested from that state. Electrons and protons are masses of substances having cosmic pervasiveness. I told you that Spirit Divine is absolute consciousness and that consciousness is reflected through these electrons and protons. Reflected state of consciousness in this plane is called cosmic consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—I have heard that western philosophy speaks of a state of cosmic consciousness. Is that really the state of Divine Mother?

SWAMIJI:—Yes. most of the philosophers accept such a cosmic consciousness. That is not Cosmic Being or Saguna Brahman. Just as human beings have consciousness, the Cosmic Being also has a consciousness. That is His glory and that power is called cosmic consciousness and it is the reflection of the Spirit Divine through electronic state of the plane.

DISCIPLE:—A human being has got intellect and mind also. Similarly Cosmic Being also may

have cosmic intellect and cosmic mind. Will you please explain, Swamiji?

SWAMIJI:—In human body, consciousness is manifested through electronic state just as I told you that cosmic consciousness is manifested through electronic state. Vibrations in that state produce different powers as I stated before. According to Saktheyas (worshippers of Mother Divine) an illusory power called Mahamaya is manifested from the state of cosmic consciousness. That power is divided into two aspects as pure Maya and impure Maya. These powers are also in vibrant state. They pervade in the lower planes. The lowest plane of corporeal universe is pervaded by the power called impure Maya and the other planes of existence are pervaded by the power called pure Maya. Thanmatras or elemental powers are developed in the state of cosmic consciousness as a result of vibrations and they manifest as atoms of sky, air, fire, water and earth and pervade in the plane of God-consciousness and below that. Consciousness reflected through atomic plane pervaded by the elements of sky, fire and air is known as cosmic intellect, and the consciousness reflected through the plane full of elements of sky, air, fire and water is called cosmic mind.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, you are speaking about the elements of sky, air, fire, water and earth. I

have heard the names of divine ether and divine Prana. Divine ether may be different from the sky and divine Prana different from the air you speak of.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, they are different in character. Divine ether is a cosmic glory in the state of cosmic consciousness. In Spirit Divine it is spirit itself. There is a sublime power called Parasakthi or Chitsakthi originated from the same divinity. This power is divine Prana. Divine ether and divine Prana exist in that exalted state as Siva and Sakthi in eternity. Sky and air are elements manifested as their glory as fire is manifested as glory of electrons and protons.

DISCIPLE:—Divinity is a word used to denote exalted glory. I am desirous of knowing its real sense. There are various material objects considered as divine. Are they made of substances capable of giving us exalted state of experience ?

SWAMIJI.—There are conceptions about certain objects as if they are divine. That depends upon the customs and mentality prevailing among different people of different places. You will see that bread and wine are treated as sacred in certain places, while milk and ghee are considered to be sacred in some others. It is the conception of

the consciousness that is doing benefit to the conceiver. You will find those objects are having special qualities in some way or other and such objects are treated as divine. Divinity is most exalted state where we may have unspeakable joy as our experience. Experience of wonder and joy will be the result of attaining divinity. In divine glory of spirit, the experience will be unspeakable and ununderstandable bliss. This is the glory of divinity.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, you told me that all souls are manifested from the state of sublime divinity and that they are existing from beginningless past. There is a belief that all souls will have to pass through a course of evolution by passing through various lives. This evolution is to take place in an orderly process. It is said that a soul of man had to pass through various lives of germination as plants, sweat-born insects, oviparous birds and other creatures and viviparous animals of different categories, before it became a man. In this connection I want to know if there are souls existing in particles of earth, pieces of stones and rocks that we find on this earth.

SWAMIJI:—No, they are not living beings. All-pervading Brahman is pervading in and through everything in this universe. But the

individualized souls exist in four kinds of bodies born, as described by you.

DISCIPLE:—Am I to understand that a human soul is evolved after passing through various lives in all these four kinds of bodies?

SWAMIJI:—In the beginning of the cycle this universe may appear with different kinds of manifestations by the will of the Cosmic Being. At the time of dissolution the Cosmic Being or Mother Divine gets all material objects dissolved into the state of cosmic consciousness and all individual souls merged in the spirit in vibrant state. All those material objects are brought out in order and the individual souls made manifested in them as before, at the beginning of the cycle. But in course of time some of these souls may get liberated and some get evolved as human beings from the state of quadrupeds. Similarly some insects may become animals and some souls manifested in plants in most undeveloped state, may get evolved as insects.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, you said that the individual states of all these souls exist from timeless past. I wonder if there will be a time when all these souls will be liberated and there will be no creation at all.

SWAMIJI:—It is very difficult to attain the highest state of Nirvana or liberation by having super-conscious experience of Brahman. In fact no one likes to reach that state where there will be no experience at all. It is a state of nothingness or vacuum. Generally human beings are satisfied by remaining in the state of God-consciousness where they can enjoy divine bliss in company with or in the presence of God. One among crores will try to reach the state of Cosmic Being where he can have communion with Spirit Divine beyond all differentiations. It is indeed wonderful to state that there will be no one to go beyond that state of consciousness where the individual can have communion with the sublime state of Spirit Divine or Brahman.

DISCIPLE:—Do you mean to say Swamiji, that the individualized state of human soul will exist in eternity? If one is to have the experience of Brahman always, he has to maintain his individuality in Brahman-consciousness.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, some like to maintain individuality in God-consciousness where they can enjoy manifested state of God with excitement and joy and some others like to maintain individuality in Brahman-consciousness to enjoy sublime beatitude. But it is needless to say that there will be no one to go beyond the state of having the experience

of sublime beatitude. Brahman is existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute. It is the state of spirit which is beyond all vibrations. It is vibrant state of Spirit Divine that gives us experience of knowledge and bliss. It is again the vibrant state that keeps up individualized nature of the soul. I have already told you that the vibrant state of Spirit Divine is appearing as matter, power, force, energy and all that is visible and invisible in this universe. Association with matter is the cause of differentiations getting manifested in spirit. Gods, angels or divinities and individual souls are manifested state of Spirit through consciousness. This consciousness is the reflected state of spirit in cosmic pervasion of matter known as powers of electrons and protons developed as a result of the vibration in spirit. Spirit shining through a centre of 'I' consciousness is called individualized state of the soul as Gods, angels or individual souls.

DISCIPLE:—Am I to understand that there is only one existence and that is the spirit?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, there is only one existence and that is the Spirit Divine. All other manifestations are appearing from that spirit as a result of vibrations. Both spirit and matter are manifested from the same spirit in vibrant state. All manifested states of spirit and matter are also vibrating in this universe. This vibration makes matter

constantly changing while spirit exists in its own glory. Individualized state of the soul exists through an individualized centre of 'I' consciousness. That centre is changing and having trans-migrations into different bodies made of different substances. The causal body is made of electrons and protons. Astral body is made up of pure elements and the corporeal body is made up of quintupled elements. There are four kinds of bodies of corporeal nature as I told you before. The soul with the centre of 'I' consciousness exists in a plant. In an insect that consciousness gets manifested and acts as a living being. In an oviparous body the soul shines with consciousness and manifested centre of intellect, and in viviparous body, the centre of mind also is manifested. After passing through all these bodies, a soul becomes fully evolved and gets into a human body with all centres of consciousness fully developed. Human consciousness is working through different centres, known as the centre of intellect, the centre of mind and the centres of sense organs. It is true, that the consciousness is shining throughout the body of all these creations, but in these centres of consciousness there is special manifestation of the power of consciousness. This is the process of evolution of a soul of man after it is manifested from the Cosmic Being.

DISCIPLE:—Does it not mean that the soul of individualized, nature gets manifested from the Cosmic Being as a spark of that Being and yet it is in utter darkness?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, you know that the Cosmic Being is having glorious state of the light of lightning as its causal body made up of pure electrons and protons. Immediately after getting individualized, it becomes difficult for that individual soul to shine in its own nature. Utter darkness is the experience of such souls. They go to ethereal darkness and from that state they spring up as plants or grass. After passing through a course of evolution in and through that class of bodies they take up sweat-born bodies of a particular class of flies that comes out of earth in a particular season. Then they take up oviparous bodies germinated from sweat in the beginning. Bugs, fleas and such insects are born from sweat, but they lay eggs and multiply themselves. After getting evolved through such bodies, individual souls take up oviparous bodies of birds and similar living beings. Then souls take up viviparous bodies of quadrupeds. We can see that a monkey is somewhat like a human being. It is to be concluded that man is an evolution of the animal called monkey. The soul that is manifested from the cosmic state and entered into darkness is getting evolved into a human being after passing

through endless number of lives in all these four kinds of bodies and is appearing as a two-legged animal only as he has not attained enlightenment. Spiritual practices make a human soul enlightened and he can attain the state of God-consciousness or Brahman-consciousness or Brahman, the Absolute as he desires.

DISCIPLE:—Brahman is said to be the light of bliss and it is all-pervading. Cosmic consciousness is also treated as light of lightning and all-pervading in character. I do not understand the existence of a state of utter darkness.

SWAMIJI:—It is very difficult to understand that there is a state full of darkness when the all-pervading principle is treated as light divine. Yet we see darkness at night due to the shade of our earth. The sun is shining during day time and we see everything shining after it. Similarly the sun of knowledge is said to be shining in God-consciousness. That sun is being hidden by earth and there will be utter darkness in the shade.

DISCIPLE:—I could not grasp anything from this explanation. Who is the sun of knowledge and how earth could hide that sun?

SWAMIJI:—The sun of knowledge is God who is residing in the plane of God-consciousness. In the state of cosmic consciousness there is nothing

visible due to the glare of the light there. It is the light of knowledge from the sun of knowledge or the personal God who resides in the plane of God-consciousness that gives enlightenment to human souls. Worldliness is meant by the word earth and divinity or Godliness is hidden by worldiness. Worldly minded souls are in utter darkness and they go to a plane of darkness after leaving the corporeal body. This is an esoteric explanation only. It is said that the plane of darkness is within this earth. All planets made of quintupled elements of earth will have utter darkness within that globe and all souls of those planets who are to go to the plane of darkness will go to that state of existence after leaving gross bodies. You know that astral body can go to such a state as it is otherworldly only. You have seen that the most undeveloped soul of a plant comes out of darkness from this earth only. You also know that the sweat-born insects are also coming out of this earth as they existed in darkness. It is the interior of this earth that is treated as the plane of nether regions for us.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji told me that at the time of dissolution all souls will merge into the Cosmic Being. Can they come out again during the next cycle?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, they come out as glories of the Cosmic Being. His glory is ununderstandable.

DISCIPLE:—Those souls who were residing in the plane of God-consciousness and cosmic consciousness also will manifest as living beings of the lower planes in the next cycle. Is it not, Swamiji?

SWAMIJI:—No, those who live in cosmic consciousness will not come down any more. Those who are in the plane of God-consciousness may come down as they were existing in relative plane of existence full of names and forms.

DISCIPLE:—In course of time all souls of animal kingdom may become evolved as human beings. I can understand that the souls residing in other bodies will get evolved and take up higher types of bodies. But there will be a time when there will be no undeveloped souls to manifest in the creation of trees and plants.

SWAMIJI:—No, in the glory of the Spirit Divine or Cosmic Being infinite number of individualized souls exist in it. You know that the wish of Brahman is the cause for all these manifestations. In its wish, infinite number of souls may appear again to continue the Leela of God (play of God).

SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji. I desire to know the process of practice as to how to get rid of this illusion or the influence of this divine Leela of the Lord. Lord may be playing in His own glory and bliss, but the soul of man is feeling misery. by all these experiences here. If there is a way out, I want to hear about it.

SWAMIJI:—Yes there are ways and means to get rid of the influence of the play of God if one is inclined to undergo certain practices. That process is called spiritual practice. God is playing by manifesting Himself as spirit and matter. Matter is nothing but spirit in a manifested state. Spirit Divine in its sublime state is called Brahman. It itself gets manifested as God and it is again appearing as the material universe. In the glory of the same spirit innumerable souls appear to participate in the play. These souls are getting identified with various objects of this world made of matter. Gross body, astral body, causal body, sense objects and all that is in the material universe are such objects with which the soul of man gets identified. Spiritual practice means an attempt to get identified with Spirit Divine by an orderly method and that method is to be followed by all kinds of aspirants of all faiths and religions. There are the followers of the path of Yoga, path

of knowledge, path of Karma and path of devotion in all faiths and religions. Those who follow Yoga follow certain external preliminaries such as controlling internal and external organs and mind, controlling the Prana or vital force and controlling one's own consciousness in all its fields of activities and they concentrate on a symbol representing spirit or Atman and sink into meditation. That object may be any form or sound as an emblem of divinity or divine ideas. Meditation on such divine objects will lead the consciousness of the meditator to that exalted state of Spirit Divine. Those who follow the path of knowledge may try to conceive the state of Spirit Divine as cosmic pervasion of divine light. If that is found difficult, there are various methods of meditating upon light of joy as shining in the heart or on the head. Divinity is perceived through light divine as we experience astonishing and thrilling joy when there is beautiful illumination at night. By concentrating and meditating upon light divine conceiving it as Spirit Divine and diving deeper and deeper into such meditations, the aspirant in the path of knowledge attains super conscious experience beyond all limitations. One who follows the path of Karma gets his inner organs purified by unselfish service of the Lord. It will be easy for him to practise meditation as prescribed by all other Yogas. Those who follow the path of

devotion may try to meditate upon their chosen ideal as seated on the lotus of their heart. The form of the chosen ideal may slowly be converted as a condensed state of divinity or light divine spreading a halo of light around the form. From all these descriptions you will know that light divine is the emblem of Spirit Divine and by meditating upon such an object, the consciousness of the meditator becomes identified with spirit. That identification with spirit will make the meditator free from the influence of matter and that is the way how to get rid of the miseries of this illusion or the play of God.

DISCIPLE:—According to monism, the aim of spiritual practices is to attain a state of evolution where the individualized nature of the soul of man can become merged in the cosmic expansion of Spirit Divine. This is the highest attainment, beyond all differentiations of time space and causation. No individuality or name and form can exist in that state. I have heard that some followers of Vedantha believe that the individual nature of the soul will exist in eternity. If that is so, how is it possible to attain the highest evolution as it is attaining the state of Brahman?

SWAMIJI:—There is a section among Vedantins who believe that the individual soul exists in eternity. It passes through various stages of

evolution and at last becomes perfect. That perfection is salvation for them. According to them attainment of perfect knowledge and bliss is the goal of an individual soul. But there are others who consider that all souls are from Brahman only although they exist from the beginningless past. After passing through various cycles of death and birth the soul of man may attain the state of Brahman by attaining divine knowledge. Very few among men try for such higher knowledge. Ordinary souls can attain the state of cosmic consciousness or Saguna Brahman where the individual can know and experience that he is Brahman. Those who believe that the nature of individual soul is to maintain individuality in eternity are having their conception of the highest evolution as attaining the state of Saguna Brahman. You know that the conception of the consciousness is the cause of all our experiences. Followers of different faiths with different conceptions attain different goals according to their conceptions.

DISCIPLE:—If such souls maintain their individualities, in spite of their enjoyment that they are Brahman, can it be possible for them to attain the state of Brahman, the Absolute?

SWAMIJI:—No, they do not become Brahman. They like to enjoy the glory of Brahman, being in the plane of Chinmandala or cosmic conscious-

ness. That state is full of joy divine. That is really the state of Samadhi as individual is having communion with the Cosmic Being. I told you that it is from this state of Chinmandala that Sri Ramakrishna's advent took place. It is a wonderfully divine state from where one can experience the state of Brahman. He was a special manifestation with a mission in life and that mission was to establish harmony between different religions and sects and also to try to establish harmony between science and religion. He also proved that God exists and He can be realized by any earnest seeker after truth by following spiritual practices. His life was a laboratory of different religions and faiths where He proved that all religions search for the same divinity. As He was an individualized being from that state of sublime divinity, Sri Ramakrishna's life was an extraordinary divinity in this plane of earth.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji told me that the state of cosmic consciousness is a plane where the soul of man remains in a state of Samadhi. I have heard of a state known as Bhavasamadhi and again there is a state called Mahabhava. Will you kindly explain the difference between them?

SWAMIJI:—Samadhi is a state of consciousness getting withdrawn from all sense organs,

mind and intellect. The consciousness working through these centres will be withdrawn and the reflected state of Spirit Divine will remain in the state and shape of the object of our meditation during Samadhi. If the object of meditation is Spirit Divine, the individual consciousness will disappear into divinity and that meditation will pass all limitations and reach Brahman, the Absolute in superconscious state. If the object of meditation is vibrant state of Spirit Divine or the cosmic state of consciousness, the individual consciousness of the meditator will visualize that cosmic state and enjoy infinite bliss and glory of that state. If the object of meditation is having personality or name and form, the consciousness of the meditator will remain in the form and state of that object. This is the lowest state of Samadhi. If one is continuously remaining in the state of the object of meditation in divine ecstasy forgetting all other objects of the world, that state is called Bhavasamadhi. Intense state of Bhavasamadhi is an exalted experience and that state is called Mahabhava. This is a rare state of experience indeed. Sri Ramakrishna had such experience during His period of spiritual practices. Sri Radha also had such experience. Devotee becomes lost in the thought of his chosen ideal and in a state of divine ecstasy he acts, speaks and behaves like a man of sublimated consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—There are different kinds of Samadhis mentioned in scriptures. I do not know if there is any mention of Sakara Samadhi (experiencing Samadhi while meditating on a form) anywhere in scriptures. You have mentioned about such a Samadhi. Will you kindly explain, Swamiji?

SWAMIJI:—There are various objects of meditations mentioned in some of the Upanishads under the name 'Vidyas'. Antharadithya Vidya is one such meditation on a form of the sun of golden hue within the space of the heart. All those meditations on any object with a form may be treated as meditations on forms. In deep meditation, the aspirant will forget himself and remain in the experience of the object of meditation only. That state is called Samadhi in the meditation on a form or Sakara Samadhi. If the object of meditation is of the formless state of God, the aspirant will have the experience of cosmic state of Godhood. The individual may experience the Cosmic Being or Brahman in that state and that Samadhi is called Savikalpa Samadhi. If the object is Spirit Divine or Brahman which is beyond our conception of our mind and intellect and which is even beyond our individual consciousness, the meditator will pass beyond all limitations during deep meditation and reach superconscious state of experience called Nirvi-

kalpa Samadhi. All these are attained by our efforts of spiritual practices, but Bhavasamadhi is not attained as a result of our efforts.

DISCIPLE:—Sri Ramakrishna was having experiences of Bhavasamadhi, often while He was alive. If that experience is not attainable by our efforts, divine grace might have bestowed on Him those glorious experiences.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, such experiences are not common to all. It is said that in olden days Sri Radha had such experiences of the wonderful state called Mahabhava. Her separation from Lord Krishna and her anxiety to be with Him again made her unconscious of herself and she became overpowered by a terrible anguish to get His association. Her only thought was about Krishna and she became moulded by Krishna consciousness. I am not going to tell you all about her experiences now. She passed through the state of Mahabhava and at last attained His realization in person. Sri Ramakrishna also passed through such a state while He was doing worship in the temple at Dakshineswar. During day time He was busy with the duties of the temple and at night while others go to bed to have comfortable sleep, He went into a bushy spot in that compound to sit and meditate there. He had no sleep, no fear of evil spirits or ghosts and He was not afraid.

of snakes. He sat there in meditation till the time of service in the temple. His worship in the temple was also in God-intoxicated state only. His anxiety to see His Mother Divine was a unique one indeed. He was in a state of divinity and intoxicated with God-consciousness in those days till He got wonderful realization of His chosen ideal. He passed through a period of unheard of austerities and practices. He could not get realizations of any kind and at last He wanted to end His life before the image of His Mother within the sanctum-sanctorum of that temple, being disgusted with His life that was of no use in the attainment of God-realization. He had heard that many great souls in the past had realized God, but he could not find out if there is any truth in the declaration that God exists and that He is attainable. He was blessed with a wonderful vision at that moment and probably that was the first realization as a result of His practices. Generally people speak of the visions of different deities with forms only. But in His case it was a unique experience. He saw astonishing divine glory of light before Him and He became lost in superconscious state.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, Generally people speak of divine experience. Will you kindly tell me what the experience in that state will be?

SWAMIJI:— The sense denoted by the word divinity is inexpressible. Experience alone will make us understand what it is. We know that sugar is sweet. However much you may try to explain it, we may not be able to bring out the meaning of the word sweetness. Only by tasting sugar we will have some idea of its sweetness. Divinity is a state of experience that we cannot explain to others. One will have the experience of astonishing glory and joy in that state. It is an unspeakable and wonderful state of experience of bliss that we call divinity.

DISCIPLE:— This is the state of Brahman as described by ancient sages.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, Brahman is absolute divinity. Brahman, the Absolute is inconceivable. But whenever and wherever we see anything divine, we are to consider that the glory of Brahman who is the essence of divinity is shining through it. Such objects give experience of divine joy. This Brahman is manifested as Divine Power in vibrant state and that power is called God or the Cosmic Being. Although Brahman is the essence of consciousness, that consciousness is getting vibrant and pervading as cosmic state of consciousness of the Cosmic Being. Due to vibration in the Spirit Divine a wonderful power is manifested in that spirit as I told you before. Vibra-

tions in that power is the cause of the manifested state of the consciousness. This consciousness is reflected through cosmic pervasion of light of lightning or electronic state.

DISCIPLE:— Do you mean to say Swamiji, that this light of divine knowledge is the light of lightning that we see in this plane?

SWAMIJI:— That plane is full of electrons and protons, but the light there, is something divine. We see the light of lightning through the sky of atomic character. Although the light of lightning that we see here is wonderful and dazzling, it is frightening also. But the divine light of electronic plane is most wonderful and it is light of knowledge and bliss only. That kind of light of lightning can be experienced in deep Samadhi. Sri Ramakrishna had that kind of experience within the sanctum sanctorum of the temple of Dakshineswar and He went into superconscious state as I described before. That light is the form of the Mother Divine whose power is cosmic consciousness.

DISCIPLE:— I was under the impression that Mother Divine is a deity who is the supreme head of the plane of cosmic consciousness. Now Swamiji tells me that She is only a power pervading the whole cosmos. She is said to be the controller of all these universes. How is it possi-

ble to exercise control over different planes of existence without a personality or a personal God with form.

SWAMIJI:— The plane of cosmic consciousness is beyond all differentiations, names and forms and is all pervading in character. There is eternal vibration in that state and this vibration produces an eternal sound known as Pranava. Pranava means the syllable 'Om'. There is a humming sound as a result of the vibrations going on in that state and that is of eternal nature. I have already told you that all powers, individual soul, divinities, Gods and Goddesses are manifested from this state as a result of these vibrations. This vibrant state of Spirit Divine is said to be the Mother of the universe as all visible and invisible universes are born from that state. She is the manifested state of Spirit Divine. Consciousness also gets manifested at this state and it is of cosmic nature. This consciousness of the wonderful Power Divine is carrying on the work of controlling all universes. This Power Divine and its consciousness are all-pervading and this power is said to be the soul of the souls of all beings. Brahman, the Absolute is the soul of this Mother Divine. This consciousness knows what all things are needed in this universe; and in its glory, wonderful powers appear wherever needed and carry on the work. You know that

Sri Ramakrishna had the experience of Mother Divine throughout His life time. He used to talk with Her and She used to guide Him in every way. There are innumerable divinities existing in this universe as glories of this Cosmic Being to carry on the duties of this universe. You might have heard that a Bhairava (a divine spirit) was giving directions to Sri Ramakrishna during the period of His spiritual practices. There was another spirit residing in Him and guiding Him as He used to say that a saint was giving Him directions. We have heard about a fight between divine mind and sinful mind within Himself. You know that He had no touch of sin in Him. Yet, such a fight took place. Wonderful are the ways in which these divinities reveal knowledge to those who are fit recipients. They reveal truths by way of symbolical expressions. You know that Sri Ramakrishna went to higher regions of spirit and found that He was manifested from the state of divine light of knowledge and that He brought down Swami Vivekananda from that state only. Both of them were born long before His having such an experience. That shows that it was only a symbolical expression to give Him knowledge as to who He was and who Swami Vivekananda was. The fight between divine mind and sinful mind also was to reveal a truth that such a fight is necessary to quell the lower

tendencies of our mind. Anyway, all these wonderful experiences are the workings of those divinities in and through whom the power of cosmic consciousness works. There is the possibility of the Cosmic Being getting manifested at a particular place to carry on certain duties just as we see in the life of Sri Ramakrishna that He was being guided by that power during His lifetime. The glory of that Being is infinite indeed. There is no individualized personality residing in the plane of cosmic consciousness as Mother Divine.

DISCIPLE:— Swamiji, you told me that this Power Divine is all-pervading and the Spirit Divine is the spirit within it. Will you kindly explain the difference between them so that I can grasp it.

SWAMIJI:—It is very difficult indeed to explain the subtle difference between them. Anyway you know that the sublime divinity is the basic principle known as Brahman. That is Spirit Divine beyond all vibrations and that Spirit becomes vibrant by its own wish in a lower stage. This basic principle called Spirit Divine is the essence of knowledge and bliss and it is infinite Existence. It is divine bliss and stillness infinitum. Due to vibrations in it, this unmanifested spirit

becomes manifested as the glory of lightning. This state is called Parasakthi or Adyasakthi by Saktheyas (worshippers of Mother Divine) and this is really the state where spirit and matter are in union; Parasakthi is the originating stage of vibrations in spirit and it is a wonderful power as it is the cause of all these universes. Vibrations in spirit develop a power called Moolaprakrithi or neutron and this neutron is the basis of all that is material. Electrons and protons are manifestations from this neutron and both these powers are all-pervading in character. Both of them together is called divine Prana and the spirit in vibrant state is called divine ether by Yogis. Vibrant state of the spirit is pervading althrough this power as its soul and it is being reflected through this wonderful power as cosmic consciousness. Spirit and matter in union or Siva and Sakthi in union is also vibrating and different powers are developed as a result of the vibration. Vibrant state of matter is caused by vibrations in spirit that pervades in and through matter. Mahamaya, a wonderful power divine with illusory powers of veiling and projecting nature is developed at this stage as I told you before. This power also is in vibrant state. All Gods, souls and divinities are manifested from vibrating spirit in electronic and ethereous state, and all material objects are born from the vibrant state of Mahamaya according to Thanthirc

system of philosophy. Vedantha does not make so many classifications. According to Vedantha, the vibrant state of Spirit Divine is the source of all souls, elemental powers and elements. Thanthric system is the occult science of different powers working in the cosmos. They call this vibrant state of Spirit Divine as the Mother of the universe. Mahamaya is a power divine manifested from this Mother Divine. From the vibrant state of this wonderful power called Mahamaya different elemental powers are manifested. These powers are called Thanmathras by Hindus. These powers develop pure elements of sky, air, fire, water and earth, in order. Different planes of existence above the corporeal universes are developed from these pure elements. It is stated in Vedantha that pure Maya is the power pervading these planes of existence as these planes are made up of pure elements. Impure Maya is the power pervading the corporeal universe and the plane of this corporeal universe is made up of quintupled elements of five kinds. You know now that the Spirit Divine is the basis of everything and that its vibrant state produces different powers called neutrons, electrons and protons and also elemental powers. Pure elements are developed from these powers. Plane of God-consciousness and two lower planes of existence in the sphere of the sun

are made up of pure elements of sky, air, and fire. All objects and bodies of living beings in those planes are also made up of these elements. There are three other planes of existence below the sphere of the sun and they are treated as planes of existence within the sphere of the moon. These planes and all the objects in them are constituted of pure elements of sky, air, fire and water. The lower part of the lowest plane is having contamination with earth elements also. This corporeal universe is made up of gross elements of quintupled nature. Each of the five elements called sky, air, fire, water and earth are divided into two parts. One half of every one of these elements is then divided into four parts. One half of each element is added to one eighth of the other four elements and as a result of this combination, five gross elements are developed. This corporeal universe and all the objects in it are thus manifested as a result of the combinations of these gross elements.

DISCIPLE:—It is very difficult to conceive the process of all these developments. I like to know how these adjustments take place.

SWAMIJI:—Brahman the Absolute is the basic principle and in the glory of that principle various powers are manifested and in their glory all these things take place.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, you said that Mother Divine is the controlling power of this universe. Now you say that in the glory of divine powers all these are going on. Are these powers Parasakthi and Chitsakthi?

SWAMIJI:—Chitsakthi is not different from Parasakthi. The higher aspect of Power Divine is called Parasakthi where vibration originates. Fully vibrant state is called Chitsakthi and both these aspects are glories of Brahman only. Due to vibrations in the power called Chitsakthi or Saguna Brahman various divine powers are manifested and it is they who carry on the work of the cosmos.

DISCIPLE:—Do you mean to say that the vibrations in the ethereal and electronic plane produce such powers. Ether, electrons, protons, elemental powers and elements are mere matter only. Am I to understand that Spirit Divine remains as mere witness only? There is a section among the followers of Vedantha who consider that there is an inherent power called Mahamaya eternally existing in Brahman. That power has got two kinds of powers. One veiling and the other projecting. Am I to understand that Paramatman or Brahman is eternal witness only while Mother Divine or Mahamaya is carrying on the duties of creation, preservation and destruction?

Your explanation gives me that kind of conviction.

SWAMIJI:—I did not say that mere vibrations in the ethereal and electronic plane alone are the causes for the manifestation of these powers. As you say, ether, electrons and elements are mere matter only. Spirit Divine is the basic principle and it pervades in and through different stages of developments of matter originated from the same spirit as I told you and in fact that divine spirit itself has become manifested as all these.

DISCIPLE:—I do not understand how matter is developed as a result of the vibrations in spirit. I think that the same spirit that is considered as sublime divinity has become vibrant in a lower stage. Inert matter developing in the spirit which is sublime divinity is something like producing something from nothingness. I cannot conceive of such a development.

SWAMIJI:—There is no question of something getting developed from nothingness. Infinite divinity is existing in eternity. It is this divinity (the Spirit Divine) that becomes vibrating. Parasakthi is the name given to the stage where vibration originates. Fully developed stage is called Chitsakthi or Mother Divine. Vibrations in the spirit bring out a state of inertness to a manifested glory of the selfsame spirit just as

utter darkness is manifested from the dazzling state of the glory of the cosmic light. It is in fact the same spirit that is appearing as matter. It is the same consciousness that is appearing as unconscious and inert principle called Moolaprakrithy or neutron. Fully vibrant state of Spirit Divine makes this matter also vibrating and this vibration brings out two kinds of cosmic powers called electrons and protons. The consciousness reflected through these substances is called cosmic consciousness and the power pervading this plane full of electrons and protons, is the power called Divine Prana or Power Divine. Material science may call it electricity. But electricity is only a glory of this wonderful Power Divine. Vibrations in this plane of matter and spirit produce different elemental powers. Ancient sages treated the sum-total of these elemental powers as Mahamaya as these powers are the causes for all manifestations in different planes of existence. These elemental powers develop as atoms of very fine character. They are also in vibrant state and as a result of their vibrations, various series are generated and combinations are formed in different planes of existence. Vibration brings out a kind of gross elements of quintupled combination as I told you before. The whole cosmos is constituted with all these powers, energies and elements developed from Spirit

Divine as a result of the vibrations that take place in every stage. Now you have understood clearly that it is not from nothingness that all these are manifested and that it is from Spirit Divine that the whole of cosmos and all that is material have become developed.

DISCIPLE:—Our Rishis described this wonderful power as Mahamaya. But I do not understand what these veiling and projecting powers are.

SWAMIJI:—You have understood that these powers and all their further developments are nothing but Spirit Divine. That truth is being veiled by Mahamaya and a mistaken knowledge about all these are projected. Sri Ramakrishna had the experience that all these what we see here are nothing but embodiments of Divine Spirit, in spite of their appearance. We know that various kinds of sweetmeats are made out of sugar. Although they appear in various forms they are in essence sugar only. Similarly all that we see in this universe are nothing but Brahman. Brahman the Absolute wished and in His glory all these universes of relative existence got manifested from Him. Infinite number of individualized souls also manifested from that wonderful state of Spirit Divine. That sublime state of spirit becomes inert matter of various planes

of existence in its own glory. Individualized state of the same spirit as the soul of living beings appear in utter darkness due to its separation from the sublime state of divinity and slowly got evolved into that sublime divinity passing through various stages of evolution. They pass through darkness into light and again from light to light of light and at last reach the highest state which is beyond all manifested states of darkness and lights. They pass through darkness to the plane of earth and from the plane of earth they pass on to the sphere of the moon. Then again they return to this earth to see if the sphere of the sun is their real abode. By undergoing spiritual practices they attain the sphere of the sun also. Some do not feel satisfied with the state of divinity in that plane of God-consciousness. They try to reach the state of Vidyumandala or the plane of the wonderful light of lighting. That state is the state of the Cosmic Being and that is really the state of beatitude. That was the state from where Sri Ramakrishna was manifested. Being a manifestation from the plane of uncontaminated divinity, He lived also as a wonderful manifestation of divinity. The circuit of an individual soul will be complete when it reaches the state of Spirit Divine which is beyond darkness and light. Spirit becomes matter and the same spirit becomes individualized

through the association of matter. The individualized state of spirit sinks into darkness, being contaminated by matter. Slowly it gets enlightenment through associations of highly evolved states of matter and at last it becomes sublime divinity itself. This circuit is called rotation of the wheel of the death and birth cycle. This ignorance is called veiling power.

DISCIPLE:—I do not understand the meaning of the expression that the individual soul that is manifested from the most sublime state of Spirit Divine is veiled by ignorance.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, there are different views as regards this Mahamaya's veiling and projecting powers. Monism declares that it is a wonderful power having veiling and projecting powers as I described above. There is another section among Vedantins who believes that it is the will of Brahman that makes vibrations in the Spirit Divine and that it is the same will that brings up all manifestations from Brahman. Due to ignorance of the individualized soul it does not see the manifested states of Brahman as Brahman the Absolute. The real nature and state of Brahman is veiled and diversities are projected by the other power called Vikshepa. These are powers called negative and positive. Negative is a power that veils the real nature of Brahman while positive is a power that projects differentiations. In fact Brahman

exists in sublime divine state without getting affected by any powers developed from its own vibrant state.

DISCIPLE:—I think that there is no meaning in the faith that the individualized states of souls are existing from timeless past.

SWAMIJI:—Really there is no meaning in that statement. It is in the glory of Brahman that these wonderful manifestations are taking place. All individual souls are mere manifestations from the cosmic spirit in vibrant state. As long as this vibrant state exists these manifestations also will have to exist. It is needless to say that there was no beginning for this cosmos and as such there was no time limit when these souls were born. Really they are only centres of consciousness to manifest individualized state of existence just as waves are seen in the infinite expansion of water in the sea. The glory of Brahman is Mother Divine and Her glory is ununderstandable.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

DISCIPLE:—From your descriptions I understand that Sri Ramakrishna is an embodiment of unalloyed purity and divinity in a human form. His state is incomprehensible to ordinary human mind and as such, I am puzzled to think as how to conceive Him during my meditations. The purpose of the practice of meditation is attaining the state of the object of meditation according to spiritual science. By meditating upon Sri Ramakrishna, the meditator is to attain His state. I do not know how to conceive that incomprehensible state during my meditation.

SWAMIJI:—You need not get alarmed by hearing all my descriptions. By hearing all these descriptions you will get an idea about the personality of that wonderful divinity in a human form. You may try to fix your mind on Him conceiving His form as you see in His photos and then slowly try to dive deep into His divine state as far as you can. If you know something about His state from all my descriptions, you will be able to get glimpses of His divine glory when you are having exalted state of your mind during meditation.

DISCIPLE:—Am I to understand that the mental state of the meditator during his practice

is the important factor that makes the meditation full of divine experience? The sublimity of the object of meditation was your description so far and now you say that the mental state of the meditator is the most important factor in the attempt.

SWAMIJI:—Certainly, the state of the mind of the meditator is the main factor that brings up divine experience during his practice. You know that it is very difficult to conceive of an object that is an embodiment of divinity by our mind. To conceive a most divine personality like that of Sri Ramakrishna, the mind of the meditator has to get ready by getting purified by hearing and contemplating the sublime state and glory of that divine being. If you do not know the sublimity and glory of the object of meditation you will conceive an object or personality in a way suited to your ideas and notions. Both the state of meditator's mind and the state of the object of meditation are important indeed. I am of opinion that the state of the mind of the meditator is most important as that mind is to conceive and concentrate on such a sublime personality.

DISCIPLE:—Do you mean Swamiji, that I will create a Ramakrishna as mere personification of my own ideas and notions if I do not hear and

understand His real state and glory before accepting Him as my chosen ideal?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, you will create a Rāmakrishna according to your ideas and notion during your meditation, if you have no clear idea about His personality. Sri Rāmakrishna is a wonderful manifestation of divinity in this plane of earth. He cannot be conceived without proper bearing and understanding. A beginner in practice may get his mind purified by various kinds of services such as worships, visiting of temples and places of pilgrimages, benevolent works of the nature of social service, hearing scriptural discourses, contemplating on those truths, associating with great sages and saints, studying sacred books and meditating on the glories of God. Another important practice for a beginner is the repetition of God's name or the sacred syllable with which he is initiated by his Guru (preceptor). That practice will make the body and mind purified and fit for proceeding with further steps in spiritual practices. Those who accept Sri Rāmakrishna as their chosen ideal have to hear about His real state of sublimity, contemplate on that glorious state and have a clear perception about His state before proceeding on with his meditation. Now it is clear that you may create your own Rāmakrishna if you do not gather proper informations

about His life and teachings before you proceed with your practices if you want to meditate upon Him.

DISCIPLE:—I have heard that the Japa or the repetition of the sacred syllable with which one is initiated is a regular practice for God realization. If it is so, I would like to hear about the practice of such repetition from Swamiji. I have heard that there are different kinds of repetitions performed by different aspirants. I desire to know about these methods.

SWAMIJI:—Some of the followers of the path of devotion begin their practices with the repetition of the sacred syllable or the name of their chosen ideal or God. Some others begin their practices with the repetition of the sacred formula (Mantbra) along with the meditation on the form of the chosen ideal. There are three methods of practices of sacred formulas as mental repetition, silent repetition through mouth and loud repetition. According to Yogic science, there is a power called kundalini or Para Sakthi lying coiled up on the plexus of Mooladbara situated on the triangular base just below the bottom end of the spinal cord and in front of the anus. That power is the source of all powers pertaining to our speech. The speech originates from that power and comes up to the space within the chest known as

the space over the plexus of Anahatha Chakra. The speech takes up ideation in that space and again those ideas come up to the centre known as the plexus of Visuddhi Chakra situated at the root of the tongue and form as word or sentence. Then that speech comes out through mouth as loud voice and that speech is called Vaikhari speech in occult language. These four stages of the speech are known as Para, Pasyanthi, Madhyama and Vaikhari sounds among Hindus. Repeating the name of God or the sacred syllable in loud voice is called Vaikhari Japa. If it is silent repetition by mouth that repetition is known as Madhyama Japa. Mental repetition is Pasyanthi Japa and it is considered to be the highest kind of Japa. The wonderful power known as Kundalini or Para Sakthi is the source of all these different stages of manifested power of speech. Mental repetition is the state where the power of speech forms into ideas and words denoting the sense and that stage is really meditation. It is impossible to perform Para Japa as that power is beyond all names and forms. You can now understand that there are three kinds of Japas in this category and there are other divisions also in the practice of the repetition of sacred syllables.

DISCIPLE.—Will this repetition of the sacred syllable give us God realization?

SWAMIJI.—This repetition, alone will not be sufficient to attain God realization. The aspirant may have divine state of mind and a divine perception in mind while he is repeating the name of God or the sacred syllable. If one can perceive the form of the Lord which is the meaning of the name of God or the sacred syllable and meditate upon that form while practising repetition, that is the best method of practice. Slowly the repetition will be stilled and the meditation alone will continue and the result will be realization of the divine personality that is beyond both names and forms. Constant attempt in keeping up mental repetition of the sacred syllable and earnest attempt at concentration and meditation on the form of the Lord, the aspirant gains a wonderful power that will lift the mind of the person to the state of the deity on whom he meditates. For repeating the sacred syllable one has to use his power of speech and the external organ, if repeated loudly, and it is needless to say that the attention of the mind is needed to some extent while performing the practice. Slowly mind must gain the capacity to be in communion with the divine state represented by the deity. It is certainly the purpose of practising this kind of repetition. This communion is real meditation. This kind of communion will mould the conscious-

ness of the aspirant in the state and glory of the deity whom he has selected as his chosen ideal. I need not say that, that attainment is the goal of a devotee. There are some others who repeat the name of God or the sacred syllable concentrating their attention on the sound of the syllable. There is a faith that all sounds are originated from the sacred syllable 'OM' as it is the sound vibrating in the vibrant state of Spirit Divine. You know that all kinds of vibrations will produce some kind of sound and the sound in the vibrant state of Brahman is said to be the sound of the syllable 'OM'. Those who concentrate their minds on the sound of the sacred syllable believe that their practice will lift them to the plane of Nada Brahman which is vibrant state of Brahman.

DISCIPLE:—Am I to understand that the attainment of Pranava Nada (the sound of 'OM') is attaining Brahman?

SWAMIJI:—Brahman is Spirit Divine. By attaining vibrant state of Brahman the aspirant gains divine knowledge and beatitude. Those who attain the state of Brahman, the Absolute go beyond all experiences and even time, space and causation. But by attaining Nada

Brahman, one may gain the attainment of the plane called cosmic consciousness where he will be hearing the eternal sound 'OM' and remaining without gaining the knowledge of Brahman.

DISCIPLE:—What is to be done for gaining divine knowledge after getting realization of the goal of our devotional practice?

SWAMIJI:—Divine knowledge is the result of attaining the state of Brahman, the Absolute. You know from my descriptions that Brahman is the essence of knowledge. In the cosmic state of consciousness the individual soul may experience a state of joy divine, by getting identified with the Cosmic Being. Individual consciousness cannot perceive the glory of that Cosmic Being as He is beyond conception. It is therefore necessary to get super-conscious experience to have divine knowledge manifested. Till that state of super-conscious experience is attained, one will have only theoretical knowledge about Brahman. But those who practise Japa (repetition of sacred syllable) does not possess even theoretical knowledge about Brahman. They may enjoy the sound of 'OM' vibrating in the plane of cosmic consciousness. By hearing and contemplating on Brahman one has to acquire theoretical knowledge and conceive the object of meditation with full perception of this state and glory. Such an aspirant will get super-

conscious experience while attempting to conceive the greatness and glory of Brahman who is sublime divinity and supreme knowledge only.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, you have stated that there is a method of practice of repeating the sacred syllable fixing the mind on the meaning of the syllable. I desire to know that method also in detail.

SWAMIJI:—There are different kinds of sacred syllables. Some are impregnated with esoteric meanings and some are impregnated with divine powers. Those who repeat sacred syllables full of esoteric meanings may concentrate on such lofty ideas during practice. Gayathri is a sacred syllable impregnated with most sublime ideas. It is something like a prayer to the power that illuminates the whole universe, saying that aspirant is meditating on the sun of knowledge who illumines the whole of this universe so that his intellect will get enlightened. There are other types of sacred formulas offering prostrations or praying for protection or prosperity. Repetition of this kind of formulas is done with concentrated attention on both the deity on whom he meditates upon and on those ideas denoted by the formula. Those who repeat sacred syllable impregnated with divine powers may concentrate on the form of God, conceiving that it is the embodiment of

those powers. You have known that in vibrant state of Spirit Divine different kinds of powers are manifested. Personal Gods appear as embodiments of some of these sublime powers and it is believed that these powers are impregnated in some sacred syllables called Manthras. There are many such syllables known among Hindus and they are being repeated by devotees concentrating their attention on the form of deity represented by that sacred formula and meditating on that glorious personality. That is the best and highest kind of practice of one who follows the path of devotion. By such repetition and meditation one realizes the personal aspect of Godhood represented by that sacred formula.

DISCIPLE:—Chanting Vedas, reading sacred books, studying scriptures, singing praises and praying are also known as steps of devotional practices. Will you kindly enlighten me whether a seeker after Truth can attain God-realization through these practices without Japa and meditation?

SWAMIJI:—They are certainly complementary steps for all kinds of spiritual practices. One cannot immerse himself in God and remain in God-consciousness always. An aspirant can carry on his practices at appointed hours for fixed length of time thrice or four times a day. The rest of the time may be used for worshipping

God and doing all these practices, if his entire life is dedicated for spiritual practice only. The most important practice of an aspirant who follows the path of devotion is meditation indeed.

DISCIPLE:—Do you mean to say that all these practices will lead one to a meditative mood?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, all these practices are to lead the aspirant to a state of God-consciousness. You have heard about the God-intoxicated state of Sri Ramakrishna while He was worshipping in the temple at Dakshineswar. He was living, moving and having His being in God-consciousness only. He was ever engaged in the pursuit of attaining God-realization in those days. It is very difficult to begin with the practice of meditation at the outset. One has to pass through a course of preliminaries as described above and then begin the practice of meditation. The form of the chosen ideal may be fixed as the object of meditation in the beginning. But in course of the practice, the conception may expand as a result of studies and contemplations and the state of meditator's consciousness may be immersed in a state of God-consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—Will you kindly say something more about the course of meditation on one's chosen ideal?

SWAMIJI:—Meditation is a most important subject, having vast bearings in spiritual evolution of a human being. There are various types of meditations as I described so far. They are to lead the soul of man to different realms of spirit after leaving this plane of earth. It is the conception of the consciousness at the time of leaving this body that guides the soul of man to the next plane of existence. That conception is the result of the spiritual practices undergone during the life-time of every individual in this plane of earth. Those who have no spiritual conception will be full of material consciousness and they take birth immediately after death and those who have nothing clear in their conception may disappear into darkness. They remain in that dark state for some length of time according to their Karma (result of actions during life-time) and take birth again in this plane of earth. These conceptions at the last moment also is dependant on one's own actions in life.

DISCIPLE:—May I understand that this dark state is called hell. I was under the impression that hell is a state of existence where the soul of man undergoes miseries as a result of his bad actions during his life-time in this world.

SWAMIJI:—No, this is not exactly what is called hell. You know that animals and other

living beings also have individual souls. As they are not affected by their actions of their lives in this world they do not go to hell or heaven after their death. They go to the state of darkness, remain there for some time and take birth again as you see trees yield fruits at particular seasons. Some species of living beings may take birth in this world without depending upon seasons. You have known that there are certain kinds of flies appearing during the beginning and the end of rainy seasons. You might know that dogs are also born during particular seasons. These souls do not take birth depending upon their Karmas (actions). They are born as a result of developments in the course of natural evolution. Human beings alone are guided by the law of Karma (action). Hell is also in this plane of darkness, but it is full of miserable experiences meant only for human souls who were immersed in sinful actions.

DISCIPLE:—To attain higher regions of spirit the method of practice is concentration and meditation as per your descriptions. But I am eager to know if devotional practices can lead the soul of man to the highest regions of Spirit Divine.

SWAMIJI:—Brahman, the Absolute is the basic principle from which all these universes and all souls of individualized character are manifested and these manifestations took place in the

will of the same principle. That principle is the essence of consciousness. Individual soul being a spark of the same divinity, it is also consciousness although limited by nature. During the course of life, the individual soul is having experiences of pains and pleasures as felt by the mind and is conducting activities as wished or desired by the same mind. This mind is only a reflected state of the consciousness as I told you before. Being part and parcel of the Cosmic Being having cosmic state of consciousness, the individual soul is having the experience as per the wish or the conceptions made by individual consciousness through the centre of mind. Similarly those who are devoted to God, worship Him through various mediums and offer services believing that those services will reach Him whom they conceived as their object of worship. The Lord whom they considered as all-knowing and all-pervading accepts those services and blesses those devotees in His infinite glory. Prayers of devotees are also heard by their God and they are blessed with realizations according to their conceptions. There are others who are not believers of personal Gods but they conceive of a power residing in the Kingdom of God in sublime glory to administer justice. They also pray to God and their prayers are answered according to their conceptions.

Again there are others who conceive God as a Cosmic Being. Their conception may be to attain a state beyond all names and forms through their worship, prayer and devotional practices. They too attain that state as they wish. You can very well understand that the conception of the consciousness of the worshipper is being realized through devotional practices, just as the conception or wish of Brahman made this cosmos manifested. Devotion means divine love of the worshipper for the worshipped. We can love a person, but it is difficult to love a principle. Love is the cause of attachment with any object loved and attachment is the cause for the resultant pleasure or pain as the case may be. Devotees offer beautiful flowers, garlands, incense and even food to God who is our object of worship considering that He accepts those offerings. We know that all these universes and everything in them are appearing by His mere wish only. Yet, we have no hesitation to offer all these petty things as oblations at His feet. He in turn accepts those offerings with delight as they are offered with devotion. God becomes manifested as a living personality through the devotee's devoted conceptions. Not only that, God also blesses the devotee to have wonderful experiences in the form or state as conceived by him. Higher experiences in the realm of the spirit are attained through meditation only. Worship and other

devotional services may help us to attain a state of God-consciousness where one can have the experience of personal Gods as we conceive them.

DISCIPLE:—I desire to know if one can reach the highest state of Brahman by following the path of devotion.

SWAMIJI:—The path of devotion can become fit to give the highest realization if one can conceive his chosen ideal as the highest principle in a manifested form. Personal aspect of God may be conceived as a personification of the highest and inconceivable Spirit Divine. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that His Mother Divine was both light of knowledge and darkness as well. Sublime divinity as well as the manifested forms and states are nothing but Spirit Divine. The same spirit is getting manifested in the form of God as we conceive Him. Meditating upon the form or the personality of God and after realizing the form or state as conceived, the aspirant may proceed on with the meditation on divine light dissolving the form of the deity in that glorious state of divine spirit whose manifestation, the personal God was. Meditating on cosmic divinity or divine light is meditating on Brahman. Now you can see that the path of devotion can lead one to the highest state of realization if the practice is meant for attaining Brahman.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, if Brahman is the goal of the human soul, why these kinds of worships of the personal deities are being followed by human beings. Lord Buddha did not accept any God. Sage Kapila also did not accept the existence of a personal God. There are many others who did not accept such a Godhood. God did not get angry with them in anyway and destroy them or their followers. If there is existence of such a God, is it not to be proved by manifesting and annihilating His opponents who preached nihilism. It is said in Puranas that there was a nihilist called Hiranyakasipu who was preaching against God. He was annihilated by a wonderful manifestation in the form of a half-lion and half-man being known as Narasimha. But Lord Buddha's religion was growing irrespective of His denunciation of Vedas and Gods. Will you kindly explain why such things are taking place?

SWAMIJI:—First of all, I have to state that these manifestations take place according to time, place and causation. You know that Lord Krishna performed a sacrifice in the name of the hill where He played and fed His cattle. He did not follow the time-honoured customs of offering sacrifices in the name of Gods. Narasimha manifested long long ago when human beings were having such notions. We know that there are any num-

ber of nihilists living in this age. Terrible destructive activities are going on in every field. God does not interfere in any manner. Human conception about God has evolved much and no one is afraid of a God who is ruling all over this universe. I told you that the essence of consciousness is called God or Spirit Divine. That power reveals spiritual laws according to the need of the time and place. Buddha appeared in an age when there was slaughter of dumb animals prevailing in the name of religion all over India. He was a manifestation of the same power who manifested to introduce Vedic sacrifices in ancient days. The purpose of the advent of Buddha was to introduce a new evolution in the field of religion that was in existence in His age. He introduced social service as a part of religion and preached the message that He got as His revelations. He declared that there is only an individualized state of consciousness existing in a living being and that there is no other existence as soul or God. He denounced Vedas, Gods and souls and introduced a system of practice to annihilate individual consciousness in super-conscious experience. Ancient sages also had made such declarations through Upanishadic Manthras (sacred formulas), but the followers could not have such high and abstruse conceptions as the society of men was not so much evolved. You will see the same defect

among the followers of Lord Buddha also and they have introduced secret, occult practices and worship of the personality of Buddha. Human society is in need of some such faith in something super human. In spite of the revelations of the ancient sages and their bold declarations, followers of Hinduism introduced various kinds of worships of personal Gods and also practices leading to different planes of existence.

DISCIPLE:—May I ask a doubt in the middle of your interesting explanations? It is said that Lord Buddha attained Buddhahood at the place known as Gaya. My idea is that Buddhahood means a state beyond individual consciousness where there will be nothing existing. After attaining such a state how could He return to the plane of consciousness?

SWAMIJI:—He declared that He has become an enlightened being. That does not mean that He reached a state where His individual consciousness was absolutely annihilated. He got revelations about the truth in that enlightened state and returned to this plane to carry on the purpose of His advent. All sages and prophets made such declarations after getting truths revealed before them by divinities as I told you before. It is only after leaving this gross body that a soul of man can attain the highest state or principle.

Sri Ramakrishna entered into Nirvikalpa state of Samadhi, but He told His devotees that His Mother Divine maintained a slight ego consciousness in Him even in that state. You have asked me why God is not appearing as He used to do in olden days. Sri Ramakrishna had the experience of different aspects of Godhood during His life time even in this age. He declared that God can be seen and experienced by all who earnestly strive to have such experiences. He has stated that the principle whom we call God can give us realizations in the form and state as we conceive Him. He said that the formless power called God takes up the form as vapour is condensed as cloud or ice due to the action of cold. Devotion acts in God and brings Him to a manifested state as conceived by the consciousness of the devotee. It is the consciousness that is having all kinds of realizations. God does not exist in His own form and He is existing as a power beyond our conception. That power is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent in character and it is all-pervading indeed. It will not get angry if you do not accept it or worship it. It is your consciousness that is causing His appearance in any form. Hiranyakasipu really was afraid of God known as Narayana and he hated that God due to his fear. His fearful conception was the cause of the manifestation of a terrible divinity who annihi-

lated him on the spot. In olden days human society believed in the existence of a personal God who used to protect the righteous and punish the demons and as a result we see a number of incarnations appearing in this world with superhuman powers. Due to the development of material science such belief has no place in the society now. In spite of destructive activities growing everywhere God is not coming in human form to protect mankind in these days. Buddha was denouncing God and He had no fear like Hiranyakasipu. He was not attacked by any superhuman manifestations. Sri Ramakrishna had faith in both personal and impersonal aspects of God and He got experiences to prove that God exists and He can be experienced as we conceive of Him. From all these descriptions you can understand that God is sublime state of consciousness and is capable of appearing in any form according to the need of the time and place as conceived by humanity at large.

DISCIPLE:—Do you mean to say Swamiji, that God will not exist if human beings do not believe Him?

SWAMIJI:—I did not say so. God will exist as sublime principle as the basis of everything. It is that principle that is pervading everywhere and it is in the glory of that principle that all

developments take place in the cosmos. It is the conception of human consciousness that causes the existence of superhuman beings in the state of God consciousness. That plane is ever vibrant with divine consciousness. Followers of different faiths and religions experience different deities or personalities there as per their conceptions. In this age of material science men do not believe in a superhuman power called God. They may accept a cosmic state of consciousness if scientifically explained. That state is known as vibrant state of spirit Divine according to Hindu conception.

DISCIPLE:—If the conception of human consciousness is the cause of manifested state of God and if the conception is as per impressions gained by experience, how could God-consciousness originate in the consciousness of an unevolved man in the beginning.

SWAMIJI:—I told you that there is no beginning for this cosmos. Anyway for the sake of understanding I may say that the primitive man is not much more evolved than an animal. God-consciousness is not seen manifested in an animal. Similarly in human society God-consciousness was not manifested in its primitive stage. Divine agencies or angels appeared before one of them who was probably the best among them and

revealed divine knowledge suited to his nature and environmental conditions. As time rolled on the society with such conceptions of God and knowledge about God got further revelations till the society became evolved as we see now. These divine agencies and angels exist in eternity in the glory of the basic principle called Brahman.

DISCIPLE:—God is said to be all-pervading. I do not understand why there is a distinct plane known as the plane of God-consciousness. It is said that personal Gods with forms exist there only. I desire to know about the state in that plane of existence.

SWAMIJI:—God is certainly all-pervading. In the plane of God-consciousness or Vaikunta, there is a wonderful vibration of God-consciousness due to sublime state of light as atoms of fire are most predominant in that state. Divine Spirit in that state gets manifested through the atomic power of fire, air and sky and that is the cause of such a vibration. Divine agencies or angels are individual souls who reside eternally in that plane just as human beings and other animate objects of this plane of earth. Due to contamination of water elements and earth elements all objects in these lower planes are perishable. It is therefore clear that things of the lower planes are evanescent. Divinities residing in the plane

of God-consciousness are parts and parcels of the divine state there and they are eternal. God in manifested state there exist in human personalities as conceived by followers of different faiths and religions. Devotees worship with faith and devotion and they get experience accordingly. God of Vaikunta is a personality with human touch and the followers of different faiths and religious experience infinite joy in the presence of such divinities. Those deities hear our prayers and bless us with rewards. They are considered as personifications of love and affection and they give consolation and refuge to their followers. It is from such a state of Godhood that incarnations take place to protect devotees of God. It is again from that state prophets appear in this world of ours. That state is called the Kingdom of God by the followers of the religions of Christ and Mohammed Nabi.

DISCIPLE:—It is said that Sri Ramakrishna was hearing talks and getting guidance from His Mother Divine. Is it from the deity known as Mother Divine residing in this plane of God-consciousness?

SWAMIJI:—These deities do not go to any other plane of existence. They remain in the plane of God-consciousness in sublime divinity. It is generally divine agencies or angels who are

to carry on the duties of the universe that give guidance and even God-realizations. They can appear in the form of the deity whom the aspirant worships and give revelations. You know that an individualized state of God cannot run about to all His followers and devotees to give guidance and realizations. It is not mere imagination that an earnest aspirant is getting realized in the state of Samadhi. Spiritual practices make the consciousness of the seeker after truth deified and in such consciousness these divinities appear in the form of the deity whom he worshipped. Sri Ramakrishna worshipped the Cosmic Being as He used to say that my Mother is Brahman itself. His experience was from that cosmic state of consciousness known as Mother Divine. That wonderful state is all-pervading and no name or form exist in that state. Wherever and whenever there is a need that Cosmic Being manifests as a wonderful divinity for that particular purpose only. You have heard about a wonderful manifestation that took place before celestial beings in celestial plane mentioned in one of the Upanishads. That manifestation took place before them to give revelations of divine knowledge. Similarly Sri Ramakrishna was having the experience of Divine Mother from cosmic state of consciousness as there are no manifested forms existing in that

plane. That plane being all-pervading consciousness it is full of divine glory and it is possible to have wonderful manifestations according to the need of the time. Sri Ramakrishna was manifested from that state as per divine ordination and He lived on the plane of earth under the guidance of the Cosmic Being to achieve certain divine mission. His mission in life was to prove the existence of God, to show that He can be attained by following any path or religion with earnestness, to harmonise and to establish unity beyond all diversities and to bring up harmony between science and religion.

DISCIPLE:—What kind of meditation was being followed by Him?

SWAMIJI:—He is a wonderful personality and His method of practice was also wonderful. Although He appeared to be a devotee of God, He was the follower of all paths. His devotion was also combined with knowledge and in fact, that is an evolution in the path of devotion. He had practised the path of knowledge and also Raja Yoga (controlling the psychic power). He was ever engaged in the work of distributing spiritual knowledge as a Karma Yogi who is to serve the society at large. His method of practice was meditation on the cosmic state of consciousness known as Mother Divine.

DISCIPLE:—That is certainly the highest meditation and I like to hear the process of that meditation.

SWAMIJI:—I have already told you about the meditation on the form of one's chosen ideal in the midst of halo of light. That halo may be expanded as a cosmic light and the form may be made to disappear into that cosmic state of light divine. Meditation on the cosmic state of light may be continued and that meditation can be treated as the communion with Cosmic Being or Mother Divine. There are other methods of practice leading to that kind of communion with the Cosmic Being. The space within the chest is considered to be very divine for spiritual practices. That space may be perceived as wonderfully luminous. The meditator may concentrate and meditate upon that wonderful luminosity within his own chest forgetting everything else in the universe and slowly sink into that sublime state of light divine. That meditation is also capable of leading the aspirant to cosmic state of divine consciousness. Then there are others who meditate upon such a light either in the centre in between eye brows or in the plexus in the centre of the head or on the thousand petalled lotus over the head or on a globe of light as his own head. It is the consciousness of the meditator that

conceives such a divine light as his mind or intellect will not be able to conceive that kind of sublimity and divine light. I have already told you that this kind of meditation is possible only after practising concentration and meditation on an object with form. Cosmic expansion of the light of lightning, infinite expansion of ether and such other objects of cosmic nature are also accepted as objects of meditation by some seekers after truth. As a result of these practices the seeker after truth will get an exalted state of consciousness and in that state his consciousness will attain supreme beatitude beyond conception. That state is called the highest Samadhi.

DISCIPLE:— I have heard that the state of Samadhi is something like the state in deep sleep. I desire to know if that is true.

SWAMIJI:— The state of Sushupthi is not exactly the state of Samadhi. In Sushupthi there is no existence of mind or intellect in an awakened state. In the state of Samadhi, mind and intellect do not exist manifested as active although the power of consciousness pervading in those centres and carrying on mental and intellectual activities exist awake in the form and state of the object of meditation. When the object becomes sublime divinity beyond the state of consciousness the individual passes beyond all limitations and attains

super-conscious experience of Brahman, the Absolute.

DISCIPLE:— I could not follow the explanation about the transformation of the consciousness into most exalted state as stated by Swamiji.

SWAMIJI:— You know that the state called wakefulness is the state of mind activated by consciousness and attracted by sense organs and their objects. If the attention of the mind is withdrawn from sense organs and from their objects the consciousness pervaded in those organs and their objects becomes concentrated in the mind. The power of this mind is put into the mould known as the object of meditation when we are meditating upon the form of our chosen ideal. It is needless to say that we try to conceive our chosen ideal as an embodiment of all conceivable divine qualities. The attempt of meditation is really an attempt to mould our mind in the form and state of the object of meditation or the chosen ideal at this stage. If one leaves this plane of earth at this stage he can reach only a state within the sphere of the moon who is said to be the deity having influence over the mind. Mental plane is called the sphere of the moon where elemental powers of sky, air, fire and water pervade. The soul of man with a body made up of four sheaths of vital force, mind, intellect and consciousness remains

in any of the planes of existence within the sphere of the moon. If the aspirant is capable of having very deep concentration, the meditation will continue without any mental modification during that period. The power of consciousness which activated the mind will remain in the form of the object of meditation and the power of consciousness which activated the intellect may try to conceive the state of the object of meditation. As the chosen ideal is conceived as a personification of very divine qualities, the power of consciousness that activated the intellect becomes full of divine consciousness. That state is called the state of God-consciousness. You know that the sun is the illuminator in this universe. The sun of knowledge is the illuminator of the intellect. It is therefore stated in Hindu scriptures that the planes beyond the state of mind are intellectual and they are known as planes of existence within the sphere of the sun. The highest plane in the sphere of the sun is known as heaven among Christians and Muslims and as Vaikunta or Brahmaloaka among Hindus. This plane of God-consciousness is called the Kingdom of God by all followers of God. By diving into very deep meditation, if one is capable of remaining in the form and state of the object of meditation, that aspirant can be satisfied that he has annihilated his mind. When he passes

away he will go to any of the planes within the sphere of the sun according to the state of God-Consciousness that is in his experience. Now you can be sure that the highest state of meditation on the form of a chosen ideal is possible in the highest state of God-Consciousness.

DISCIPLE:— Now I have understood the science of meditation. It is the consciousness alone that is getting sublimated by diving deep into divine personalities or qualities. You have told me that such a sublimated consciousness alone will be able to conceive any object of consciousness or of cosmic pervasion. I think that the centre of intellect becomes inactive when the seeker after truth sinks into communion with Cosmic Being or cosmic state of consciousness.

SWAMIJI:— Yes, the centre constituted with elements of sky, air and fire and situated in the plexus of Ajna Chakra is the centre called intellect. That centre becomes inactive and the consciousness activated the power of intellect which was only a reflected state of the individualized consciousness of the soul of man becomes one with the centre of 'I' consciousness. That 'I' consciousness is to meditate upon the cosmic state of consciousness as I told you before.

DISCIPLE:—Do you mean to say that this 'I' consciousness is getting entangled with everything in this world? This 'I' consciousness is similarly getting free from the bondages of the world by spiritual practices according to your descriptions. If it is so, the individualized state of the existence is the cause of all miseries.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, the individuality is the cause of all miseries. Unity in diversity is the highest aim of all those practices. The unity means Spirit Divine and diversity is produced as a result of vibrations in the spirit. One who can go beyond all diversities attains beatitude or Brahman. This Brahman is Spirit Divine beyond all vibrations. Brahman the Absolute or Spirit Divine is the sublime principle and it is existing in its own glory in eternity. It is needless to say that this 'I' consciousness is manifested as a result of vibrations in the spirit. This 'I' consciousness is the cause of all that is mine. All experiences are also centred around this individuality. If there is no individuality there will be no happiness or misery or any kind of experience. You asked me if the state of Sushupthi is the same state that one experiences in Samadhi. Both in the state of Sushupthi and in the state of Samadhi there will be the same experience of bliss, unspeakable. But one who goes to the state of

Sushupthi may return with all his old tendencies and knowledge while one who goes to Samadhi may return with divine knowledge, burning all tendencies in that fire of knowledge. That divine being becomes vibrant with divinity radiating divine knowledge always. In Sushupthi, mind, intellect and consciousness will be sunk into ignorance and the person may be free of miseries and happiness. He will be in a state of blissful darkness while in sleep. One who is in Samadhi may remain in the state of glorious light of knowledge in a wakeful state of consciousness although his consciousness does not pervade in any of the centers known as intellect, mind and senses. That consciousness remains in wakefulness of the light of divine knowledge. But the experience in both these states may be of the same type of bliss only. You may be surprised to hear that the experience in dream state and the state of trance are also almost the same. In the state of dream, we pass through various experiences in a sub-conscious state of mind while in the state of the highest type of trance we pass through wonderful experiences in a super-conscious state.

DISCIPLE:—I want to know if the attainment of bliss as stated by you is the aim of all spiritual practices.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, attainment of sublime state of bliss is the end and aim of all these practices. In all relative planes of existence, all experiences are evanescent. But in Spirit Divine the only experience is sublime beatitude and that experience may be eternal. Such a state of attainment is the goal of human life and that is gained by all these practices.

DISCIPLE:—Buddha's theory seems to be that there is only a centre of consciousness as the soul of man. He says that the annihilation of that centre of consciousness is Nirvana or salvation. It seems that that view is correct as you also say that the annihilation of 'I' consciousness is the goal of all these practices. The only difference I see between your theory and the theory of Lord Buddha is that you conceive of a cosmic state of consciousness while Lord Buddha says that there is nothingness beyond the individualized state of consciousness. That view is also corroborated by your explanation about the state of Spirit Divine. I am puzzled to understand the sense underlying all these theories.

SWAMIJI:—It is indeed confusing to think about all these abstruse theories. But, somehow we have to find proper conclusions for varying declarations made by different seers of truth. They existed in different ages and they

got revelations according to the need of the time. You may ask now hearing my statement as to the cause of varying revelations while there is another declaration that truth is truth in eternity. The only truth is that Brahman or the Spirit Divine exists in eternity. All other theories are changing according to the changed conditions and states of evolutions taking place in the conceptions in human consciousness. You know that Brahman or spirit is the essence of divine consciousness and it is indivisible basis of all other manifested states in the cosmos. Vedantins declare that the soul of man is existing as the ether contained in a pot while infinite expansion of ether is existing as inconceivable and indivisible. If the pot is destroyed the ether in the pot is one with the cosmic ether. Similarly the soul of man shines through three kinds of bodies known as causal, astral and corporeal bodies. If all these mediums through which the spirit is seen reflected are destroyed by spiritual practices the individual soul becomes Brahman itself. This is the declaration of some section of Vedantins. Some others say that the soul of man is a reflected state of Brahman as the one and the same sun is seen reflected in different water pots or different pools and lakes. This theory seems to be baseless as there is nothing existing outside Brahman as the medium for such a reflection. I have told

you that Spirit exists beyond all vibrations and the same Spirit becomes vibrant in a lower stage. Vibration produces infinite number of individualized centres of consciousness in the vibrant state of Spirit Divine. These centres exist in vibrant state and all our practices are to get over this vibrating condition. I have made it clear that by withdrawing the power of consciousness from all our sense organs, mind intellect and also individualized centres of 'I' ness and having communion with cosmic pervasion of light divine the individual becomes cosmic. That is certainly vibrant state of Brahman. The soul of man may enjoy divine glory and beatitude in the experience of the state of Brahman at that stage, but there will be the centre of 'I' ness existing. If that centre is annihilated by super-conscious experience there will be the existence of Brahman the Absolute, free of all vibrations. It is needless to say that this Brahman is beyond the conception of all our powers of consciousness and beyond all manifested states of divinity. Lord Buddha might have expressed that state of Brahman as non-existing. Nirvana means the state, free of all vibrations.

DISCIPLE:—With all these explanations I could not understand what the soul of man is.

SWAMIJI:—The soul of man is the individualized centre of 'I' consciousness. In the

infinito existence of Spirit, there appear centres of 'I' consciousness in the glory of the Cosmic Being who is ever in vibrant state. By spiritual practices one can reach either the vibrant state of Spirit Divine or the Spirit beyond all vibrations. One is beatitude while the other is beyond expression.

DISCIPLE:—I shudder to think of a state beyond all expressions. Is it not better to attain a state where there is peace and beatitude?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, generally human beings attain that state of beatitude and enjoy bliss in eternity. No one wants to go beyond that state where eternal beatitude reigns.

DISCIPLE:—I do not get convinced that there will be the reign of beatitude in the spirit that is in vibrant state. My impression is that the spirit beyond vibrations is sublime divinity and supreme beatitude.

SWAMIJI:—You cannot say that there is divinity or beatitude in that state of the spirit. That state of spirit is beyond all experiences and limitations. Vibration in spirit brings out enlightenment and that enlightened state is beatitude. The individual soul wishes to enjoy sublime divinity and beatitude and that goal is attained through higher spiritual practices. Nobody wants to go beyond that State of experience.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, there are certain practices called Yogic systems of practices. Are they also leading the soul of man to the same state of beatitude?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, Yogic practices are aimed at the attainment of Kaivalya which state is the highest Brahman. Yoga means union of the individual with the Cosmic Being. There are preliminaries such as controlling the internal and external activities of the mind and organs, controlling the vital force by controlling the functions of breath, gaining control over the posture to sit in meditation and withdrawing the mind from sense organs and their objects. Then one may go on with concentrated meditation till one goes into Samadhi. There is a path known as Kundalini Yoga among Yogis. That path is to awaken a wonderful power lying coiled up in the plexus on the triangular base in front of the anus at the root of Merudanda or spinal cord. By regulated breathing in, keeping the breath in or out, and breathing out through certain channels of vital force known as Ida and Pingala in occult language and sending up the coiled up power known as Kundalini lying as stated above by will power of the Yogi, the Yogi experiences wonderful spiritual attainments and gains spiritual knowledge. His power of mind increases and the modifications in

the mind and intellect become controlled and he becomes capable of sinking into very deep meditation. Such a Yogi fixes his mind on an object of meditation making it a symbol of the highest divinity and realizes the highest beatitude in super-conscious experience known as Samadhi.

DISCIPLE:—There is a method of Yoga known as Hata yoga. Is it not also a method of spiritual practice?

SWAMIJI:—No, it is only a kind of practice to keep the body healthy and strong.

DISCIPLE:—I have heard that there is a course of practice among the followers of the path of knowledge to analyse the entity known as a human being to find out who he is. Will you kindly explain the course of that practice also?

SWAMIJI:—Generally human beings are having conceptions that they are their bodies. Body is made of five kinds of quintupled elements. Gross body is called the sheath of food (Annamaya Kosha) in Vedantic language. All that we see in this universe are made up of these quintupled elements only. Bodies made of elements are indeed changing every moment and are treated as perishables. Souls cannot be changing and they cannot be treated as perishables. The seeker after truth takes up his body to discriminate and

find out if the entity called 'I' is the body. He finds that the body is passing through various changes till it is perished while the 'I' consciousness is unchanging and imperishable as far as he knows. Finding that the body is changing and perishing, he rejects the body and takes up one by one all the other inner sheaths. The sheath of vital force, the sheath of the mind, the sheath of intellect and the sheath of consciousness are similarly rejected as they are changing. At last he finds that he is the sublime principle called Brahman and he sinks into deep meditation on the state of Brahman. Brahman the Absolute is all-pervading principle and it is Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute. The seeker after truth tries to meditate upon such a state of Brahman and attains enlightenment that he is Brahman. This kind of negation is one of the methods followed by the followers of the path of knowledge. There is another method of positive conception as described about the meditation on cosmic pervasion. That is a better method to attain super-conscious experience of supreme knowledge and sublime divinity. There is possibility of attaining that state of experience by following another method known as Anandananda Vidya in ancient days. By fixing all attention of the consciousness in one point either on the plexus of Ajna Chakra or on

the lotus of Sahasrara, all modifications of the power of consciousness are annihilated. By making the consciousness still one attains supreme boatitude. In this exalted experience there is a chance of the existence of a vague 'I' consciousness as the centre of meditation will be a point only. Brahman is all-pervading expansion and that is the highest state.

DISCIPLE:—Karma Yoga is a path leading the soul of man to higher regions of spirit. Then there are Vedic Karmas capable of leading human souls to the plane of God-consciousness. Will you kindly explain about those Karmas and their effects also?

SWAMIJI:—Vedic Karmas produce certain powers and those powers are capable of leading the soul of man who performed those Karmas to the plane known as Brahmaloaka. The followers of Vedic Karmas do not believe in the existence of a personal God. They attain the plane of God-consciousness and remain there in a state of divine joy till the effect of those Karmas keep them there. Karma Yoga is a step necessary to purify the mind and intellect of any aspirant following any path or faith. Seeing God in every living being is the end and aim of the path of devotion. Path of knowledge declares that all that we see and know are nothing but Brahman. The follower of the path of knowledge

requires purification of his mind and intellect by doing unattached actions while the follower of the path of devotion requires purification of his mind and intellect by serving God through the services of human beings. It is needless to say that the occult practice known as Rajayoga requires pristine purity for the individual as a whole. This method of Karmayoga is needed for the followers of all other paths as it is purifying.

DISCIPLE:—Self-surrender is said to be a course of practice to attain God-realization. There is another method of self-negation, it seems. Are they also methods of practices leading human souls to higher regions of spirit?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, they are also practices leading the soul of man to a higher state of experience. Self-surrender is a devotional practice common in all faiths and religions. You know that Sri Ramakrishna was following that path during His lifetime. He used to ask His Mother Divine for all that He wanted and used to get answers. His surrender was so complete that Mother Divine took charge of His life and guided Him in every way. That kind of faith and self-resignation may not be possible for all. Christianity is built upon such a faith and resignation. Mohammedanism also is having that kind of faith and resignation. Hinduism accepts that path as a devotional prac-

tice and that is really the highest practice in the path of devotion. Self-negation is the result of the practice of self-surrender as you see in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. Man forgets himself and lives in the consciousness of his chosen ideal. Such a soul lives, moves and keeps up his being in the personality of his God and possesses nothing for himself. He is not able to feel his existence as a separate being from his chosen ideal. Such a soul attains oneness with that Divinity whom he worshipped throughout his life.

DISCIPLE:—Personal God is the destination of all these devotional practices mentioned by you. Such a God may be only an experience of the individual consciousness according to its conception. Am I not correct Swamiji?

SWAMIJI:—It is indeed an experience of the individual consciousness according to its conception. But that personality can be experienced as a living personality with human qualities of every divine nature. Devotees can have association, inspiration and consolation from such a personal God. His presence can be felt and that presence will be elevating the devotee to an exalted state of consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—These experiences are as a result of our imaginations, as conception means imagination in a way.

SWAMIJI:—I told you that there is the need of proper learning and understanding about one's own chosen ideal before beginning meditation. It is not imagination that we get realized. It is our knowledge after proper contemplation and meditation that we get realized. You know that you cannot become God of the universe if you imagine such a God and meditate upon Him. God of the universe is having the power of creation, preservation and destruction and He is existing in sublime glory in the Kingdom of God. It is not an office attainable by human souls. No human soul can attain that state of power and glory. It is the glory of the Cosmic Being that exists in the Kingdom of God. This Kingdom of God is cosmic state of consciousness and the Cosmic Being is the God of the universe.

DISCIPLE:—It is stated in Hindu scriptures that there are three aspects of Godhood as Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara existing in the state of God-consciousness. I do not understand your description that the cosmic state of consciousness is the Kingdom of God. Followers of other religions also speak of the Kingdom of God and they call it Heaven where supreme beatitude reigns. I understand from your descriptions that their Heaven is the same state of God-consciousness or Vaikunta mentioned by you. Now I am in a confused state to understand these varying statements.

SWAMIJI:—Kingdom of God mentioned by other religions is the same state of God-consciousness, as they speak of a God whom they follow. I spoke of a cosmic Godhood beyond all such differentiations. Hindus believed in a personified state of Godhood as residing in the plane of God-consciousness while others do not accept such a God with form. They conceive of God as a personality with all powers and glory, but the Son of God or the Prophet is His only manifested representative according to their faith. It is needless to say that those who reach the plane of God-consciousness by following those religions will have to reach a state where those manifested representatives reign over their followers. They too believe that God exists in an unmanifested state of existence as they consider that God is unknown and unknowable by the soul of man. Souls of men enjoy divine glory in the state of God-consciousness as a result of their pious and God-fearing lives sublimated by devotion, self dedication and obedience in carrying on the commandments of God. But Hindus believe that God exists in a higher state known as Chin-mandala or cosmic state of consciousness and that is the Spirit Divine in vibrant state known as Saguna Brahman. That Cosmic Being is the Ordaining Power and my descriptions are about that state of Godhood. That is really God

although human souls can have experiences of divinity and divine glory in the plane of God-consciousness. In the glory of God, wonderful divine personalities exist in the plane of God-consciousness to bless and guide devotees. There is a vibration of exalted state of joy in that plane of God-consciousness and that is the goal of all devotees. Human beings cannot become Gods of the plane of God-consciousness in spite of their conceptions and meditations. They may enjoy the presence of such a God and be in sublime state of joy in that state of consciousness. Now you have understood that it is not mere imagination that we get realized as a result of spiritual practices.

GOAL OF DIFFERENT RELIGIONS

DISCIPLE.—Sri Ramakrishna used to say that different religions are paths leading to the same goal. If there is difference in the conceptions about the state and glory of God how can they attain one and the same God by following different paths?

SWAMIJI.—He practised different religions and found that the ultimate goal of all of them were one and the same. His conception about God was of a cosmic nature. You know that He was manifested from the state of Cosmic Being although He declared that the divinity that appeared in the form of Rama and later on as Krishna was this Ramakrishna, at the close of His life. It is stated in Hindu scriptures that Lord Rama was an incarnation of Vishnu who is the presiding deity of Vaikunta and the protecting power of this universe. Krishna was another manifestation of the same divinity with fully manifested glory of the Lord according to Hindu conception. Sri Ramakrishna manifested wonderful divinity through His life, but He was not having super-human power manifested in any way. Generally incarnations are said to be having such wonderful power as their glory and it is said that there are ten incarnations of Vishnu

although one is yet to come with such powers and glories. I am not going to discuss about the historicity of these manifestations as most of them were of pre-historic adventures. Human society has evolved much and I told you that divine manifestations also are having similar evolutions in them. Lord Krishna appeared with wonderful power and glory. Lord Buddha who is considered as the ninth incarnation of Vishnu by the followers of Hinduism in the north, was having a different kind of evolution introduced in the society. Lord Christ and Prophet Mohammed Nabi are also special manifestations of God who protect this universe although Hindus do not accept them. You know that the protecting power of the universe cannot be treated as Hindu or Hindu God only. He is God for all and that power manifests as Lord Christ and Mohammed Nabi to lead and guide human society towards righteousness. These manifestations were also to show the society enlightened and evolved faith and religions suited to the time and place. Hindus as a whole do not accept Sri Ramakrishna as an incarnation of God. He is called a Paramahansa meaning that He is existing in a state where He can see divinity alone.

DISCIPLE.—Do you mean to say that He is not an incarnation of God?

SWAMIJI:— I do not make Him an incarnation of God, but I say that He stands much above an incarnation. You know that He Himself declared that He is from that cosmic state of light divine. That is the most high state of divinity that illumines the whole universe. You see now that His teachings are being followed by different peoples and nations without the distinction of caste, creed or colour. His advent was to vitalise all religions and to spread the message of harmony between different religions and faiths. He lived as a spiritual laboratory testing all faiths and religions and proving the existence of God in all His manifested states and glories. This is an age of material science and His advent was for harmonizing between material science and spiritual science also. But He manifested Himself as a laboratory, leaving to His foremost disciple Swami Vivekananda to draw conclusions and to proclaim before the world that there is harmony between material science and spiritual science. The Great Swamiji made the proclamation before this world and is giving out details in a wonderful manner as ordained by the Lord. If He had attempted to do this work while in a human body he would not have received so much revelations from divinities about whom we have mentioned in this treatise. That may be the cause of this wonderful divine ordination. Anyway incarna-

tions are from the protecting power of the Lord of the universe while Sri Ramakrishna is from the Cosmic Being although the divinity that manifested as Rama and Krishna is also in Him to complete the work of harmonization between different faiths that Krishna did through Geetha. You may consider Sri Ramakrishna as an incarnation of God if you want, or consider Him as a manifestation of perfect purity and divinity only. He stands much beyond an incarnation as He is the glorious sun of knowledge for the whole world. His advent brought about wonderful changes in the conception of God in the human society and these changes will lead men to the conception of cosmic Godhood.

DISCIPLE:—There is a possibility of attaining the plane of God-consciousness by following all religions of the world as per your description. But the cosmic state is not conceived by all the followers of all religions. Will there be such an evolution as a result of the advent of Sri Ramakrishna who is only a manifestation from the Cosmic Being.

SWAMIJI:—Certainly, that was the purpose with which Sri Ramakrishna appeared in this world. He underwent all kinds of practices prescribed by all religions to establish such a goal

acceptable to all. He declared that the same substance known as water is called Pani, Jala and by various other names in different languages of the world and similarly the same power known as God is called by various names. That power is conceived with or without form by different religions. Sri Ramakrishna conceived that power as light of lightning or divine light of knowledge as He used to say that my Mother is Chinmayee meaning the light of knowledge. Again He had experiences of wonderful divine light on different occasions while He was in an exalted state of experience. Man may follow any religion, but if his conception of God is of sublime divinity and power beyond all differentiations, he will attain the state of cosmic consciousness. This was the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna and this evolution in the conception of Godhood is the solution for religious antagonism and fight. I need not say that this evolution in the conception of Godhood has paved the way for attaining cosmic state of God to all followers of all religions.

DISCIPLE:—Different religions are having different methods of practices. Will those practices lead the soul of man to the highest divine state where the Cosmic Being reigns?

SWAMI:—There are preliminaries in all religions and they may be varying in quality. But

the highest communion or meditation alone will give realization and that practice may be done with highly evolved conception about God.

HARMONY BETWEEN MATERIAL SCIENCE AND RELIGION

DISCIPLE:—Modern science does not find the need of a God for the processing in the development of this cosmos and all powers working in it. They believe whatever they can prove by analyzing in the science laboratory and so far, they have not found out any substance called spirit by their researches. Do you think Swamiji, that there will be a time when they will discover that there is the existence of something called spirit.

SWAMIJI:—I do not think that scientific researches can discover a substance called spirit. They have already reached oneness as a result of their researches and that one substance is said to be the cause of all that we see and know. If you take up any gross object and get it analysed in the laboratory, you will find that it is made up of atoms only. If you go on analysing further, you will find that those atoms are developed from elemental powers manifested from their source of vibrant state of electrons and protons. Further researches will find that the source of electrons and protons or of everything in this universe is only one substance known as neutron. That substance is a mass of matter and that is the origin of everything material. I do not think that material science can go beyond this oneness of matter.

Spirit is not a substance to be found by analysing matter, as it is beyond the reach of human consciousness. It is to be experienced by the individual soul in super-conscious state called Samadhi. This Samadhi is the result of concentrated meditation on a cosmic pervasion of light divine. Cosmic state of conglomeration of light of lightning having continuity for a long time is one of the methods known as Brahmanda Vidyut Vilasa (cosmic light of lightning) meditation. Similarly a condensed mass of the light of lightning wonderfully glittering in cosmic pervasion can be meditated upon as a higher practice. The former method requires modifications in the consciousness as the meditator will have to conceive lightning lines in and through cosmic pervasion of light in quick succession. The latter practice will make the consciousness expanded as a Cosmic Being and by keeping the consciousness in that state for long, there will be a wonderful serenity and stillness experienced. That stillness is the state of Spirit Divine. By Divine grace, the meditator will be lifted to a super-conscious state of existence beyond all limitations of time, space and causation and also all differentiations. By withdrawing the power of consciousness from the centres of sense organs, mind and intellect and expanding that power of consciousness into cosmic pervasion, one can attain cosmic state of consciousness and in

that state only one will be able to realize the sublime principle called Spirit.

DISCIPLE:—If that is so, what is the possibility of proving the existence of spirit as the basis of matter which is the substance with which the cosmos is made of?

SWAMIJI:—Oneness of matter is proved by scientists as they declare that neutron is the mass of substance from which electrons and protons appear in vibrant state. These electrons and protons are of cosmic nature as they are all-pervading. Due to vibrations in them, a wonderful light resembling the light of lightning is manifested in that state. That cosmic light is the state of cosmic consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—You told me that Spirit Divine is the essence of consciousness. Now you say that the cosmic state of wonderful light resembling the light of lightning is the state of cosmic consciousness. I could not understand your explanation at all.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, there was something more to be explained. The spirit that is existing in cosmic pervasion in stillness of sublime and unmanifested beatitude gets vibrated by its own will and that vibration produces the substance called neutron.

DISCIPLE:—How is it Swamiji, the spirit in vibrant state is becoming a substance which is not in vibration?

SWAMIJI:—You know that electric energy is generated from the etheric atmosphere due to terrible momentum of the wonderful machinery in motion and that current appears as steady lights through proper mediums. The same current is used for boiling water and also for cooling water, and getting condensed as ice. This kind of inconsistency will be found in the development during the course of evolutions in the universe. I told you that there are nails and hairs in the human body and horns in the animal bodies developed as inert matter while the body of animate beings are having some kind of consciousness. Similarly in the vibrant state of Spirit Divine an inert substance called neutron is manifested in the glory of the same spirit. Vibrant state of spirit is pervading that mass of matter and as a result that matter is also getting vibrated as two kinds of mass of substances known as electrons and protons. Various powers are manifested from that state of electronic plane and all those powers are also in vibrant states. Individualized states of Gods, divinities or angels and souls of living beings are manifested from this state of Cosmic Being who is known as Saguna Brahman or Mother Divine.

among Hindus. This state may be called cosmic state of consciousness according to western philosophy. Elemental powers are also developed from this state of electronic plane and due to the vibrations in those powers atoms and atomic energies are also developed in lower stages. These atoms are also in vibrant states and as a result of these vibrations they appear as gross elements of quintupled nature. They are also vibrating eternally and these vibrations produce gross objects and corporeal bodies of everything in this cosmos.

DISCIPLE:—Now I see that Lord Buddha, sage Kapila and others are right in their declaration that there is no God existing. You describe that everything in the cosmos is developed as a result of vibrations in every stage. I do not know if Hindu philosophers agree with this view of modern science. Anyway I do not find the need of a God or a Cosmic Being for the developments and evolutions in this cosmos according to your statement.

SWAMIJI:—I have described all these to prove that the views of modern science and the views of ancient sages who followed occult methods to find out spiritual truths are almost the same and their findings tally as far as I can see. Ancient sages spoke of Brahman as the highest state of

divinity and the basis of all these visible and invisible universes. That Brahman is beyond all vibrations. By its own will it becomes vibrating and that stage where vibration originates is called Para Siva by the followers of Mother Divine. Vibrations in that state of Para Siva brings up a power divine called Parasakthi which is really the state where spirit and matter is in union. This state is called Sivasakthi union by them. Moolaprakrithi is the name given to the material power of this union which is the source of everything material. They say that this Parasakthi is appearing further, developing as Chitsakthi with full powers and glory as manifested divinity and that state is known as Vidyunmandala or the plane of wonderful light of lightning. This state is called the state of the Mother of the universe. It is from this state that all Gods and Goddesses are manifested as stated above. You know that various developments are taking place in this cosmos in the way of evolution. In a science laboratory scientists carry on processing for any kind of development to be made spending large amount of money and human power. In the cosmic laboratory such developments of cosmic nature are taking place without any human attempt. This invisible or ununderstandable spirit in vibrant state is causing all these developments. This spirit is all-pervading in and through

all material objects causing different kinds of vibrations in different stages resulting wonderful manifestations of animate and inanimate objects. This vibrant state of Spirit Divine is the Cosmic Being or God. Brahman the Absolute is beyond that state and it is inconceivable and inexpressible.

DISCIPLE:—This spirit is all-pervading and it cannot be treated as a cosmic entity having a personality. This spirit does not appear to be a power having creating, preserving and destructing powers. Is there no God to control the affairs of the universe?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, this Cosmic Being is controlling the affairs of the cosmic evolution and the divine powers manifested from Mother Divine are to conduct cosmic business according to inspirations received from cosmic state of consciousness. I have already told you that a power called Moolaprakrithi is developed from Para Sakthi and that power appears as Vidyunmandala or the plane of the light of lightning. That plane is the manifested state of consciousness. This consciousness is all-pervading and as such it is all-knowing. Divine Powers get inspiration from this cosmic state of consciousness as they are parts and parcels of the same Cosmic Being. Elemental

powers known as Thanmathras in Vedanthio language are manifested from this vibrant state known as Saguna Brahman. Vedantha does not speak of a Para Sakthi or Chit Sakthi and they call the vibrant state of Spirit Divine as Saguna Brahman. Thanmathras are manifested from Saguna Brahman and they develop as pure elements of five kinds. They again develop as gross elements and these different elements constitute visible and invisible universes. Manifestation, preservation and annihilation go on as directed by the Cosmic Being who is called God. Spirit Divine is all-pervading divinity.

DISCIPLE:— Your description gives the idea that spirit in vibrant state develops as neutron and that substance develops as electrons and protons. Elemental powers are developed from the state of electrons and protons and fine elements are developed from them. Gross elements are also developed from fine elements and the whole universe is constituted with these elements. Material science does not mention a Spirit Divine, but other details are more or less the same. That science does not mention about any spirit or divinity to permeate in the matter to bring out those developments. Is there any possibility of harmonising between science and religion?

SWAMIJI:—Both material science and spiritual science aim at a state full of beatitude. By controlling different powers working in this external universe and by converting all those powers in a way to yield maximum happiness to human beings, scientists are aiming at the attainment of beatitude in this plane of earth while the occultist is trying to control and conquer the occult powers working in this universe and to go beyond the state of miseries of death and birth. Both are working with one and the same motive although the path followed by each is different. You know that everything in this universe, to the point of an atom, is in a vibrant state. This vibration is the cause of death, birth, happiness, misery and such other experiences. If one can go beyond and reach a state beyond all vibrations, that one can attain the state of beatitude. Due to this vibration all states and objects in this universe are constantly changing. This universe is called 'Jagath' meaning that which is constantly changing. If we search for perpetual peace and beatitude in this changing universe by studying, analysing and discovering any kind of substance or powers we may not succeed in getting lasting solution for any of our problems here. It is true that we may get more and more happiness from this external universe by scientific researches and attainments,

but to have perpetual happiness and enlightenment, we have to withdraw our attention from all that is material and try to gain intuitive knowledge through occult practices. You have asked me if there is any possibility of having some kind of harmony between science and religion. You found that both these sciences tally in their conclusions about the developments in this material universe. You have known that there is unity in the conception of the goal to be attained as both are searching for peace and beatitude. Intuitive knowledge through occult practices may be accepted as the only course for attaining beatitude. Scientists also can gain that state of beatitude without donouncing any conclusions of material science as you see that the discoveries of that science tally with the declarations of those who were adopted in occult science.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, you said that the spirit is not to be discovered by scientific research and that the practices of occult science are some kind of communion with God or Spirit Divine. Without having some kind of conviction that there is the existence of a principle called spirit, there is no possibility of making any trial in the practice of occult science. Will you kindly find a way out to have some sort of conviction that there is some kind of existence beyond matter.

SWAMIJI:—Spirit is beyond conception and it exists as the basis of everything in the universe. In that exalted state of Spirit Divine there is no vibration of any kind. Due to its own will it became vibrating and that vibrant state is known as Power Divine. Vibration produces various kinds of powers and all those powers are also in vibrant state. These powers are again producing atoms of five kinds in vibrant condition. Vibrations in these invisible atoms produce manifested state of matter known as quintupled elements and they are also in vibrant condition. All those vibrations are caused by spirit as it is pervading in and through all these states. Spirit in its sublime state beyond all vibrations is all-pervading and the vibrant state of Spirit Divine is also all-pervading. Matter is only a manifested state of spirit as a result of vibrations and these endless vibrations cause endless developments without any human aid. One who thinks of these wonderful developments in this universe will have to admit that there is the existence of something wonderful as the summum bonum of this universe. That invisible principle is the basis of everything and it is known as Spirit Divine or Brahman. I told you that the same principle becomes vibrant in lower stage and that that state is called Power Divine. That state is known as Saguna Brahman

and that is Mother Divine. Saguna Brahman or Mother Divine is the ordaining and controlling power in this cosmos. Gods and Goddesses of manifested states and forms are glories of this Power Divine and they exist in a lower stage. It may be difficult for a scientist of the modern age to accept these manifested states and forms of God as they appear through material powers only. But, he can accept a cosmic state of consciousness that pervades and controls developments and evolutions in an orderly manner throughout this cosmos. This cosmic state of consciousness is known as Power Divine or Cosmic Being or Saguna Brahman according to occult science. I told you that all attempts of researches in all directions are aimed for the attainment of sublime beatitude. Material science is also making researches with this aim. The knowledge of a scientist about the wonderful developments and evolutions of powers in this cosmos must give him a glimpse of the glory of the Cosmic Being and he will be a better person to dive deep into meditation on such a Divine Power known as God, Spirit, Brahman or cosmic consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—God is supposed to be existing in the plane of God-consciousness. Material science

may not accept the existence of such a God in a manifested form-

SWAMIJI:—These wonderful developments and evolutions taking place in this cosmos every moment are well known to all scientists and as such they are better equipped with secret scientific knowledge about evolution theory. Unmanifested spirit evolves as manifested state of power divine in vibrant state of electronic plane and the same spirit manifests as Gods and Goddesses in the state of God-consciousness where there are manifested states of atoms of different kinds pervading. You know that the same spirit is shining through atomic plane of our earth as the soul of man with human personality and human feelings as we experience during our life time. Most divine plane of existence in atomic state is the plane of God-consciousness. Divine manifestations from the most wonderful Power Divine exist in that state of God-consciousness as wonderfully evolved divine beings and they are called Gods. You can imagine that there will be all aspirable noble and divine qualities shining in them. These Gods are being worshipped by followers of different faiths and religions conceiving them according to the development and evolution of their consciousness. It is needless to say that

those votaries of different Gods enjoy divine glory and grace from the Lord whom they worship. If there is no knowledge about scientific secrets, there is the chance of having superstitious and begoted beliefs just as the primitive men had, and scientific knowledge helps a religious-minded man to have highly evolved conceptions about the state of Godhood of the plane of God-consciousness. The state of Cosmic Being is beyond all differentiations, well-understandable to all scientists. I think that scientists also can accept personal God as the object of their worship and meditation. They may find it easy to have concentrated meditation on their chosen ideal in the beginning and slowly they may be able to lift their conception to the cosmic state of Godhood by making the form disappear into a state of cosmic light.

DISCIPLE:—All these descriptions so far do not give me the conviction that a scientist will understand and accept the existence of something beyond matter. Unless they accept the existence of something beyond matter, there is no possibility to have a spiritual renaissance.

SWAMIJI:—I cannot make the existence of something beyond matter revealed before you if you are not prepared to follow any of the practi-

ces described by me. Spiritual experiences are to be gained by the consciousness of the practitioner in the state of God-consciousness. Higher experiences are attainable in super-conscious state only. Occult practices alone will give us realizations in spiritual science. My descriptions are capable of giving knowledge and a sincere seeker after truth can understand that a wonderful power is pervading in the cosmos in whose glory all these developments and wonderful evolutions take place. Most sublime and ununderstandable Power Divine who ordains these developments is conceived as Spirit Divine in vibrant state. Brahman the Absolute or sublime state of Spirit is beyond all vibrations. These mysterious developments and evolutions taking place before us prove the existence of something ununderstandable, activating different powers in different stages in different orders. That something is the substratum of everything and that is known as God, Lord, Allah, Brahman or Spirit Divine.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, can you not show some proof for the existence of the wonderful power called Spirit?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, all these animate and inanimate manifestations are certainly proving the

existence of something beyond our conception. Different species of lives are seen before us in the glory of that power. A man is seen living with various capacities and powers. In a moment he is disappearing behind some screen and others say that he is dead. A wonderful change takes place and as a result of that change even the gross body of that man begins to rot. The soul of man is said to be the glory of the entity known as Spirit Divine. As long as the soul was existing in the body, the man was treated as alive and his body was treated as animate and living. As soon as the soul leaves the body, rigor-mortis sets in and the body begins decomposing. It was the soul that was shining in the body as a man and that soul left him at the time of death. Is it not a proof to show that something invisible and ununderstandable is existing as Spirit Divine.

DISCIPLE:—Personal Gods shining in the plane of God-consciousness are probably individualized states of the cosmic soul. Human souls are also individualized from the soul of that Cosmic Being. I want to know if there is any difference between them?

SWAMIJI:—Personal Gods are not individualized souls from the cosmic soul. They are manifestations as personalities from the state of God-consciousness. The spirit pervading in the plane

of God-consciousness is the same spirit that shines in the cosmic state of consciousness, but due to the development of atomic condition in that plane of existence, the glory of the spirit also is manifested wonderfully in that state. Personal Gods appear in that state of God-consciousness as glory of that wonderful state. They are not individualized beings as human beings.

DISCIPLE:—It is believed that incarnations of God appear in this world from the personal God known as Vishnu. If there is no existence of a personal God as Vishnu, how is it possible to treat these incarnations as manifestations from Vishnu?

SWAMIJI:—Godhood of Vaikunta (plane of God-consciousness) is one and one only. Manifested states of personalities are mere glories of that divinity. It is that divinity that appears as incarnations in this world. The plane of God-consciousness is the state of power that protects this universe and as such, devotees treat all incarnations as manifestations of that power.

DISCIPLE:—I desire to know if there is any difference between cosmic Godhood and the Godhood of the plane of Vaikunta.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, there is difference in their manifested states of existence. Vaikunta is a

plane where atomic energy vibrates. Light-waves giving the experience of sight pervade in that plane. Gods and human souls are having shining forms in that plane and therefore it is a plane of differentiation. Cosmic Godhood exists in the cosmic state of consciousness shining through the most wonderful electric power of electrons and protons. Electrons and protons are the minutest substances pervading in the cosmic state and therefore, the consciousness in that state is cosmic in character. There is no differentiation in that state and the Godhood of that plane is illuminating Power Divine. Cosmic Godhood being beyond all names and forms and all kinds of differentiations peace, harmony and beatitude will be bestowed on the votaries of such a God by that Cosmic Being. Material science will certainly help us to conceive a cosmic state of consciousness full of the light of lightning. That state is known among Hindus as Saguna Brahman or Mother Divine.

DISCIPLE:—By scientific analysis one can find out atomic state and electronic state in this plane of earth itself. Swamiji told me that there are different planes of existence where atomic and electronic conditions prevail. Will you kindly enlighten me?

SWAMIJI:—Atoms, electrons, protons and neutrons also can be found out by analysis of any object in any laboratory. I told you about certain regions in the fourth dimension where these substances alone exist. Those planes where these substances alone exist are called planes of existence where souls reside in causal and astral bodies. This plane of earth is full of quintupled elements although there is possibility of finding out pure atoms, electrons, protons and neutron by analysing any object of this plane. In the higher planes of existence you will not find any object made of the lower developments of matter. Spirit Divine pervades in all these planes alike. But it shines more in the higher regions as the matter pervading in those planes is of very fine character. As we go higher and higher we may experience more and more of spiritual joy as Spirit Divine is sublime beatitude. The highest plane of cosmic consciousness is pervaded by electrons and proton and therefore the plane is said to be full of light of lightning. The experience there will be dazzling light of knowledge and bliss. For want of vibrations in neutron, we may not find higher and evolved state of existence in the state of athercou plane of neutron. In the state of highest existenc

of spirit and matter known as Parasakthi Mandala there is possibility of the existence of human souls.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND EVOLUTION OF COSMIC GODHOOD.

DISCIPLE:—I desire to know if Sri Ramakrishna has contributed anything towards the evolution of a cosmic Godhood.

SWAMIJI:—Yes, He alone has revealed a Cosmic Power as God. All other incarnations and prophets were manifestations to revive spiritual laws followed by a particular religion or to establish new religion that was the need of the age and place. Sri Ramakrishna's advent was only to vitalize all faiths and religions existing in this world by practising and realizing different practices prescribed by them although He was a Hindu. First of all He attained the highest goal that is attainable in super-conscious experience by a highly evolved seeker after Truth who follows the religion of ancient sages of India and became a knower of Brahman as declared in 'Srutis' or sacred books on revealed divine knowledge. Then He practised other faiths and religions as ordained by the Power Divine. His practices of different methods prescribed by different religions were not only meant for proving that all of them were different paths leading to the same goal, but also for empowering and infusing with vitality all those paths and practices of all faiths and religions of the world. We have never heard

of such a life of one who has practised and realized all kinds of practices prescribed by different religions and faiths of this world. This wonderful man was a unique manifestation in this world of ours and He himself declared that His advent was from the cosmic plane of divine light. We know that there were divine manifestations once in five hundred or thousand years to revitalize any of the then existing faith or religion, spreading wonderful waves of spiritual current or to establish new faiths, but we have not heard of a divinity who was not manifested for any particular faith or religion. Such a wonderful personality was manifested from the cosmic state of Godhood as the time needed a new evolution. His advent was for harmonizing different religions and to bring up a spiritual renaissance. It was therefore essential that such a manifestation should take place from cosmic state of Godhood. He accepted a Cosmic Being known as Mother Divine who is the source of all these visible and invisible universes, as His chosen ideal. Although it was a Godhood accepted by Hindus only, He declared that that power was known as Father in Heaven, Allah or God in other religions as well. He practised different religions, attained their goals and found that all those paths were leading to the goal known as God or Brahman. You have asked

me if He has contributed anything towards the evolution of a cosmic Godhood. These descriptions may convince you that He has revealed a cosmic Godhood who exists in cosmic consciousness beyond all names and forms.

DISCIPLE:—He did not proclaim before the world that His advent was to establish such a Godhood in this world. His descriptions about God are also following Hindu conceptions. How can we understand that His advent was for revealing a cosmic Godhood?

SWAMIJI:—It is indeed true that He was a Hindu by birth. But by His life and practices He became a man of all religions. His conception of God was that of a power that is the source, sustaining power and attainable goal of everything in this universe. That state of God is known as cosmic Godhood. Sri Ramakrishna did not proclaim the purpose of His advent, but He revealed spiritual knowledge after making experiments in His life. It was the great Swami Vivekananda who received these revelations and proclaimed before this world and prepared the ground for a religious renaissance. The Swamiji was also brought down from the highest region of the cosmic plane of divine light by Sri Ramakrishna to carry on the purpose of the advent of this world.

derful divinity. Both Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are manifested in this plane of earth from cosmic state of consciousness, according to the declarations of Sri Ramakrishna. Swami Vivekananda also spoke about cosmic Godhood known as Brahman or Atman. His field of activities was the whole world and His aim in life was to lead the society of men, irrespective of caste, creed and colour to that cosmic state of Godhood. These great personalities contributed much for the evolution of the conception of a cosmic Godhood for humanity at large.

DISCIPLE:—May I know the real purpose behind the advent of these two great souls at this age?

SWAMIJI:—This is a question not concerning with human society. Various evolutions are taking place in this cosmos as ordained by the Power Divine known as God of the universe. Such secrets are not to be revealed before human society. You can see wonderful developments taking place as a result of these lives in this world as foreseen by them. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that unknown people speaking unknown languages in far off lands will become His followers. Now you see that there are many who follow His teachings. Although He was treated as mad by

the people of His own native land while He was alive, He is being worshipped as God by many, all over this world within a few years after His passing away. It was Swami Vivekananda who declared before this world that Sri Ramakrishna was a wonderful manifestation of Sublime Divinity in a human form. The purpose of the advent of these great personalities at this age is to make a religious renaissance and to harmonize between material science and spiritual science. They have introduced wonderful evolutions in the conception of a cosmic Godhood and also made adjustments in the conception, practices and ideals of the followers of the religion of the sages of India and tried to spread the message of peace and harmony among different religions of this world. The effect of their lives and works are getting manifested slowly and this world will know more about them in course of time. There is a wonderful evolution taking place in the Kingdom of God as a result of their advent.

DISCIPLE:—The kingdom of God is eternal and unchangeable. How can there be changes and evolutions there?

SWAMIJI:—Brahman the Absolute is eternal and unchangeable while personal Gods with or

without forms are changing and evolving according to the changes and evolutions taking place in this world of ours. You know that Lord Krishna was born about five thousands of years ago. No one knew about such a being before His advent. After His time people worship Him and meditate upon Him as their chosen ideal. He was an incarnation of God of Vaikunta and as such He had to attain that plane of God-consciousness after leaving this earth. Moreover He is being worshipped and followed by crores of human beings ever since His advent to this plane of earth and as a result of their faith and devotion and also conception of the consciousness during meditations such a personality has to manifest in the plane of God-consciousness to bless His devotees. Lord Krishna was not only a God for His followers but He was also manifested state of divinity in a human form. That divine power that shone as Lord Krishna has to remain as an individual deity in the plane of God-consciousness. Lord Christ was born about two thousand years ago and He too has crores of followers. Lord Buddha, Mohammed Nabi and others also are having innumerable followers. Every time of an adjustment in this plane of earth by a Messenger of God, it is necessary to have certain adjustments in the higher regions also where God-consciousness exists. Evolution of new

Godhoods will take place in the higher regions. You know that the souls of men who follow Lord Christ or Mohammed Nabi will have to go to a state where those divinities reside. Before the advent, of Christ there was no sphere of Christ in the plane of God-consciousness. But after His advent such an evolution took place in the Kingdom of God. Similarly a wonderful evolution is taking place as a result of the advent of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda to this world.

DISCIPLE:—What do you say Swamiji, every time after the advent of a great personality in this plane of earth, is there the necessity of an adjustment in the plane of God-consciousness?

SWAMIJI:—I did not say that there is an adjustment after the birth of a great personality in this world. You are under the impression that these incarnations and prophets are notable personalities of this plane of earth. Incarnations and prophets are born as ordained by the Lord of the universe and they are being followed by crores of human souls as a result of the same divine ordination. No one can make a soul of man, however great he may be, as a God or deity in the Kingdom of God. Sri Ramakrishna did not want that His devotees should treat Him as

their Guru (preceptor) even. But, due to the mysterious will of God He has become God to many a human being. You are not going to live to see the growth of His glory after a few hundreds of years. Thousands and thousands will follow and worship Him and they will have to reach a state where His divine state and personality reside. Due to the advent of material science and also due to the wonderful evolutions and realizations suited to this age during His life time Sri Ramakrishna stands as a unique personality in the history of mankind. He has to deal with a religious revival affecting the whole world and make adjustments suited to this age. His life was a laboratory of religions to prove that all religions and faiths are different paths leading to different states of God-consciousness. He declared that the highest state is unity beyond all diversities known as Brahman and He attained that state in superconscious state of Samadhi. This unmanifested Brahman becomes manifested in vibrant state as a wonderful Power Divine whom He called Mother Divine. He accepted that Power as His chosen ideal and attained realizations of Mother Divine through various kinds of practices. His experience was that all deities, whomsoever He meditated upon, became one with Him. He was manifested from the plane of Cosmic Being.

He attained the highest state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi in super-conscious experience where there is no limitation of time, space and causation and He Himself shone as a Cosmic Being by being the goal or disappearing destination of different Gods and Goddesses during His life time. All these experiences may be symbolical to show future developments in the Kingdom of God.

DISCIPLE:—What do you mean by symbolical experiences of spiritual truths?

SWAMIJI:—You will find from Upanishads that spiritual revelations are received through symbolical experiences. Kathopanishad speaks of a Nachikethas who went to the presiding deity of death to know the state of experiences in the planes of existence after death. Kenopanishad speaks of a wonderful manifestation of divinity known as Yaskha who taught and gave spiritual revelations to Gods who reside in celestial plane. Similarly Sri Ramakrishna got revelations about Himself and His foremost disciple, Swami Vivekananda through symbolical experience only. You know that Sri Ramakrishna went into a most exalted state of Bhavasamadhi and saw that He was manifested as a child from the cosmic plane of light of divine knowledge or light of lightning.

That is the state of Saguna Brahman or Mother Divine according to His conception. He found that Swami Vivekananda was manifested as a divine manifestation from a wonderful being who existed in that plane in deep Samadhi. All these experiences were gained much after the birth of both of them. Don't you understand that these are mere symbolical experiences revealing divine knowledge about both of them. He used to get revelations about His devotees and followers, knowledge about Brahman and Brahmamayi (Divine Mother), information about what is going to take place in future during His life time and what will take place after His time, through such symbolical experiences only. You may know that most of the Puranas (epics) are written by sages describing such symbolic experiences they got to reveal spiritual truths or devotional methods suited to the notions and conceptions of human society at that age. It is through such revelations that new evolutions take place in spiritual conceptions. You have heard about a vision that Rani Rasmany who built the famous temple of Dakshineswar had when she was about to start on a pilgrimage. That vision gave her a new light and she dedicated a large portion of her property for the good of many and for future generation as well. Sri Ramakrishna had a vision of His

Mother Divine producing everything of this universe and again swallowing them Herself. That was an experience to give Him an evolved conception of Godhood that the power that is the source and destination of everything is God. Mother Divine is Cosmic Being or Saguna Brahman. It is that power whom devotees are to conceive as God as that is the source and destination of everything. Different deities conceived with limited powers can lead the soul of man to a plane full of differentiations. You know that the plane of Vaikunta where personal Gods exist cannot be treated as beyond differentiations. Sri Ramakrishna was born from the cosmic state of Godhood. He had His spiritual practices leading to that cosmic state of Godhood. He revealed a common Godhood to the followers of all religions of this world as Cosmic Being whom He described as Power Divine called God, Lord, Allah or Brahman and He attained that state of cosmic Godhood to bless His devotees and followers.

DISCIPLE:—Am I to understand that Mother Divine is the Cosmic Being?

SWAMIJI:—There is no motherhood or fatherhood there. God is a Power Divine existing beyond the differentiations of male and female. It is the light of light and knowledge divine. There

is no differentiation of any kind in that state of existence. He called that state of Godhood as Mother Divine and said that it is the Power that is called God or by any other name by the followers of different faiths and religions. This God is to be worshipped by all religious minded people if they are to attain the state of cosmic Godhood.

DISCIPLE:—I want to know more about the changes and adjustments that may take place in those higher regions of spirit as a result of the advent of Sri Ramakrishna.

SWAMIJI:—I told you that it is not a subject to be discussed here as those changes and adjustments are ununderstandable by men of this earth. As you are asking with earnestness I will tell you something more about the new evolution going to take place in those regions. I told you that a manifestation of the form and personality of Sri Ramakrishna will have to take place in the plane of God-consciousness for the sake of His followers and devotees. It is not that all His followers and devotees are going to attain that state of God-consciousness when they depart from this plane of earth, but some devoted and pious souls may reach that state according to the merit of their spiritual practices. The form and personality of Sri Ramakrishna will have to remain as sublime divinity as the head of that plane. You

know that He Himself said that the coin of the period of Akbar will not have money value at this age although the value of gold may not be lost. He is declared as Yugavathara by the great Swami Vivekananda meaning that He is the incarnation for this age. The most important incarnations of Hindus were Lord Rama and Lord Krishna. They were sublime divinities of the plane of God-consciousness during their age. The same divine power that appeared as Rama, and later on as Krishna was manifested in Ramakrishna according to His own declaration. It is therefore clear that Sri Ramakrishna is the personality that will shine as the sublime divinity in that plane hereafter.

DISCIPLE:—Do you mean to say Swamiji that Sri Ramakrishna attained the plane of God-consciousness only in spite of His super-conscious experience of Nirvikalpa Samadhi?

SWAMIJI:—He has attained the state of Brahman as He was a knower of Brahman. But for the sake of His followers and devotees, His personality and form has to exist manifested in the plane of God-consciousness. You know that Lord Siva, Lord Vishnu and other deities exist in that plane in manifested form and personality for

the sake of their devotees although they are conceived as all-pervading Gods. Lord Rama appeared as Lord Krishna in the plane of earth to make evolutions and adjustments suited to the changed conditions here. There are any number of devotees who worship Lord Rama even now in this plane of earth. Although the individualized soul of Rama reincarnated as Krishna, the form and personality of Rama has to exist in that plane of God-consciousness for the sake of devotees. Similarly Sri Ramakrishna also will have to exist in the plane of God-consciousness to bless His followers and devotees who are increasing year by year. These glorious manifestations of forms and personalities take place in the glory of the Cosmic Being. This is of course a new evolution of a God in the plane of God-consciousness. Sri Ramakrishna's advent was from cosmic state of Godhood and He meditated on such a God. He taught His devotees and disciples the conception of a God who is all-pervading Power Divine. By practices and realizations He became the embodiment of all Gods and Goddesses of all faiths and religions. You can imagine that He being a manifestation from the cosmic state of Godhood, different Gods and Goddesses could become one with Him as all forms and personalities are manifested from Cosmic Being only. Sri Rama-

krishna's advent was to reveal this state of Cosmic Being beyond all differentiations of names and forms and also differences between faiths and religions. It is needless to say that the manifested state of divinity in the plane of Cosmic Being is Sri Ramakrishna. So, far incarnations of God appeared from the Lord of Vaikunta. Messengers of God also appeared from that state only as they speak of the Kingdom of God. That plane of existence is within the glory of those divine manifestations. Sri Ramakrishna was a combination of both these aspects of Godhoods as Lord Krishna's soul was also manifested in Him. You know that the path leading to the plane of God-consciousness is devotion and that the paths leading to higher planes of consciousness are the path of knowledge and the path of Yoga. Sri Ramakrishna was a combination of all these paths of devotion, knowledge and Yoga. It is therefore clear that He is to be the living glory of the plane of God-consciousness and also the newly evolved divine glory of the plane of cosmic consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—There is no personality existing in the plane of cosmic consciousness according to your descriptions. How is it that Sri Ramakrishna is going to be the glory of that plane of Cosmic Being?

SWAMIJI:—I told you that a wonderful evolution is going to take place as a result of the advent of Sri Ramakrishna from the state of Cosmic Being. He was a manifested state of Cosmic Being and also a combination of all Gods and Goddesses of different faiths and religions. Moreover He was a combination of different paths and practices prescribed by different religions. He was again a combination of different goals mentioned by different paths and He was the highest principle as He had attained that state by super-conscious experiences. Such a wonderful manifestation was the need of the age as there is the necessity of a new evolution in that region of the spirit. It was again a wonderful phenomenon that the life of that wonderful personality was a manifestation by symbolizing spiritual truths after making experiments by following different faiths. That life was a religious laboratory to prove the truth of the existence of Spirit Divine through occult practices. That is also an evolution needed at this age as there is a necessity of harmonizing between material science and religion. Human society has advanced much in the knowledge of material science. There is therefore a need of a spiritual renaissance to establish spiritual laws in the field of material evolution as all evolutions are taking place in the glory of spirit only. Sri Ramakrishna's life contributed

much to prove and establish the truth of the existence of a power called God. He could see, talk and get guidance from that mysterious power called Mother Divine. Such a manifestation of divinity appeared in this world to make adjustments suited to the need of the age and the result is a renaissance in the spiritual science. Modern culture requires a new evolution of Godhood of cosmic character. That requirement is being fulfilled as ordained by the Power Divine through the advent of Sri Ramakrishna.

DISCIPLE:—Cosmic Being is spirit in vibrant state and it is existing in eternity. Different Gods and Goddesses are manifestations from that cosmic state only. What was the necessity of a new evolution as all the existing Gods and Goddesses of different faiths and religions are evolved deities of the Cosmic Being only.

SWAMIJI:—These evolutions will take place always suiting to changed conditions and mentality of the society of men. You can see from the history of this world that human society is passing through various changes and evolutions as ordained by the Power Divine who pervades the whole cosmos. Divine manifestations like Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, Mohammed Nabi and

many other divinities appeared in this world to make adjustments and evolutions suited to time, place and causation. Sri Ramakrishna appeared to make adjustments and evolutions at this age. From my descriptions you have understood the need of evolutions in the realms of the spirit also according to the changed conditions in this world. The need of this age is to get a cosmic Godhood evolved as the modern culture can understand a cosmic consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient Power Divine and in the glory of that Power things will go on. Why special manifestations are to appear to make adjustments and evolutions?

SWAMIJI:—The glory of Spirit is that it will manifest as soon as a vibration takes place in that ununderstandable Spirit. You know that the wish of Brahman is the cause of manifestations of Divine Powers and the whole of this cosmos. Spirit is sublime state of consciousness beyond all vibrations and that spirit becomes vibrant by mere wish of the same principle. In every state after development, the spirit gets evolved and manifested as divinity according to the conditions prevailing there. In the state of God-consciousness the manifested state of Godhood is the prote-

oting Power whom followers of different religions call by the names of Vishnu, Narayana, Father in Heaven, Allah or God in Heaven. The conception about these Gods are that they are divine powers without any form of any kind although Hindus conceive certain forms representing these powers for their worship and meditations. These forms were revealed by divinities who exist as glories of the Cosmic Being. Ancient sages got revelations from divinities and they went into deep meditations on those forms till they realized such deities in Samadhi. They gave descriptions about the form, state and qualities of those deities as they realized for the good of the society at large. These forms of God are existing in the plane of God-consciousness in different spheres under the reign of the Cosmic Being. I will reveal a truth that these deities exist in the plane of God-consciousness, only to bless and to give experience to their followers and devotees as they conceive and meditate upon such a God while they were in this plane of earth. Cosmic duties are carried on as directed by the Cosmic Being who is known as the Power Divine or Ordaining Power.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji told me that Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, Jesus Christ, Mohammed Nabi

and such other manifestations of God are the heads of different spheres in the plane of God-consciousness. Now you say that there are other heads of different spheres existing in that plane. Will you kindly enlighten me on these points?

SWAMIJI:—I was going to explain all those points after disclosing this truth. In the plane of God-consciousness there are different spheres for different faiths and religions. Hindus alone worship God with forms. Before the advent of the worship of incarnations, Hindus used to worship personal God like Siva and Vishnu as revealed by divinities. Some people worship those deities even now.

DISCIPLE:—I have seen Buddha Viharas (monasteries of Buddhists) where Lord Buddha's images are being worshipped. Will not those worshippers attain the plane of God-consciousness where such a form exists?

SWAMIJI:—Buddhists do not accept the existence of a God or a soul in man. The aim of their practice is to attain Nirvana or nothingness. They try to concentrate and meditate on a point or nothingness to get beyond the state of consciousness as they consider that man is mere consciousness only. Very few will be able to attain

such a state by meditation, as there will be difficulty to conceive an object without form. Followers of Lord Buddha evolved a course of meditation and worship by accepting Lord Buddha as their refuge.

DISCIPLE:—I have not heard if Sri Ramakrishna experimented the path of meditation taught by Lord Buddha.

SWAMIJI:—We do not know the details of His practices while He was an aspirant. No one can say what all methods and practices of meditation were accepted by Him during that period. I have told you that He was given training by divine agencies also, over and above the training He received from human Gurus. Lord Buddha did not accept the existence of a God or any spirit beyond consciousness. Sri Ramakrishna was born to establish spiritual renaissance only and He did not want to make experiments with the arguments of any nihilist in any way.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, you told me now that the followers of Lord Buddha take refuge at the feet of Lord Buddha. What will be the result of such a resignation?

SWAMIJI:—They will attain realization of the

form and personality of Lord Buddha in the plane of God-consciousness.

DISCIPLE:—May I take it for granted that the form and personality of Lord Buddha is existing in the plane of God-consciousness?

SWAMIJI:—Yes, all Gods whom their votaries worship and meditate upon will be existing in the plane of God-consciousness. Followers of Buddha who do not attain the highest Nirvana will have to reach the plane of God-consciousness, if they are leading their lives as directed by Him.

DISCIPLE:—Mohammedanism and Christianity do not believe in any God with form. Who will be the head of the spheres of the followers of those faiths in the Kingdom of God?

SWAMIJI:—It is well known that Prophet Nahi and Jesus Christ will be the heads of those spheres in that plane. They do not conceive of superhuman beings as Gods residing in the Kingdom of God and as such they have no such Gods existing there. They believe that invisible Power Divine reigns over the Kingdom of God and maintains justice. They are followers of Prophet Nahi and Lord Christ and those messengers of God are their leaders in the Kingdom of God. Hindus

also have similar Gods or Lords whom they call incarnations of God. Rama, Krishna and Ramakrishna are such divinities residing in the plane of Vaikunta. Superhuman divinities also reside there as stated above. Sri Ramakrishna revealed cosmic Godhood and the method of His practice was to lead the soul of man to cosmic state of Godhood. Sri Ramakrishna is the manifested state of divinity in the cosmic plane of consciousness as I described before and He exists in that state as Chit Sakthi Swarupa (embodied divine power) for the benefit of the souls residing in that plane without distinction of caste, creed and colour. You know that He had attained Nirvikalpa state of Samadhi where the soul of man can become Brahman. It is the highest state of experience where the individual becomes Brahman. In the case of Sri Ramakrishna, the Ordaining power ordained His return after becoming Brahman as He was destined to be the manifested divinity in the cosmic plane of consciousness. He was given training in all kinds of practices of different religions and faiths and was given experiences that all Gods and Goddesses are entering and disappearing into Him by that wonderful power Divine to evolve out a cosmic Godhood beyond all distinctions of faiths and religions. He is the

head of the cosmic state of consciousness where votaries of Cosmic Being exist and enjoy communion with Him. I need not say that He exists as a manifested glory in Brahman, as He could maintain individuality even in the state of Brahman.

DISCIPLE:—I do not understand all these mysterious developments as mentioned by you. How can you predict these developments and evolutions in the higher regions of the spirit?

SWAMIJI:—You know that Sri Ramakrishna's words will never go in vain. He declared that I am a manifestation of the divine power known as Siva who is said to be the bestower of salvation according to Hindu faith. Siva, the giver of Mukthi is the embodiment of divine knowledge. I knew that I was a manifestation from that power known as Siva even in my childhood. Sri Ramakrishna told me that He will exist wherever I desire Him to exist and it may be beyond your understanding if I say that I am the authority for all these evolutions. I was capable of predicting various developments and evolutions in this world while I was in a human body. Now I am in a divine state and I am capable of knowing many things more than before.

DISCIPLE.—Swamiji, I desire to know why God appears in this plane of earth to effect such adjustments and evolutions suited to different ages?

SWAMIJI.—I told you that the wish of the Cosmic Being gets manifested in all planes of existence in the order of superiority. In this corporeal universe the manifestation will take place in a tangible manner. Such adjustments and evolutions took place in this world through the life of my Master and myself. I had a desire to bring out these publications while I was alive. But I had to leave this plane of earth at a very young age and that desire is being fulfilled now. After leaving this plane of earth we are to make adjustments and evolutions in the higher regions of spirit as we were the instruments in carrying on such adjustments here. These things are not understandable by human beings, as they are matters of higher regions. It is enough if you know that we are to make such adjustments in those higher regions as we have effected certain adjustments here. People may not understand that we have been watching and guiding all these

adjustments taking place in this plane of earth, but you may know that we are at the bottom of all growths towards the evolution of a cosmic state of Godhood and practices leading to such an attainment of Cosmic Being. I do not want to reveal further details about the adjustments and evolutions in those planes of existence as they are ununderstandable to human beings. Yet I say that there is a system of arrangement to lead human souls to different planes of existence in the higher regions of spirit and that kind of leading work is done by divinities or eternal beings of those planes. They are special divinities residing in those planes as the manifested glories of the Cosmic Being. They get inspiration or direction from cosmic state of consciousness and they act accordingly. You have heard that four of Sri Ramakrishna's disciples were Iswarakotis. Iswarakoti means divinity or Parshada or attendant of God. At times they also accompany incarnations of God when they appear in this plane of earth. During the advent of Rama and Krishna it is said that many of them were born with them. You know that those incarnations appeared manifesting full glory and powers of God. It was therefore necessary to bring many of the attendants also with them. Sri Ramakrishna was manifested from cosmic state of

Godhood where there is no such pomp and glory existing. Lord Krishna's soul also manifested in that life and that was the cause of bringing four of His attendants also with Him. Swami Vivekananda was brought down from the highest plane of existence to carry on the above adjustments and evolutions. I need not say that Sri Sarada Devi, the consort of Sri Ramakrishna was from the plane of Divine Mother only. Sri Ramakrishna had many of His disciples from higher regions only. They were great sages or devotees before. Sri Ramakrishna need not be considered as an incarnation of God as He was from the Cosmic Being. But He was a wonderful divine personality much beyond the state of an incarnation. I used to say that He was not a personality and that He was a principle only. I knew that He was born with a special purpose and I found that He was having divine ordination in every walk of life. I have never heard of such a divine manifestation anywhere in this world in the history of mankind. Such purity and divinity alone can exist as a guiding principle in the plane of cosmic consciousness. That state of existence is so divine and that is the state where the individual can have communion with the Cosmic Being or Brahman. You can consider

that state as the ocean of Satchidananda (existence, knowledge and bliss absolute). You know that in the topmost portion of the flat waters of the sea there will be vibrations of waves manifested always. But at the bottom of the fathomless waters there will be no vibrations of any kind and infinite stillness prevails there. That state of stillness is Brahman in that plane of cosmic consciousness. Sri Ramakrishna is to exist in that state of divinity as a manifested glory of Brahman. Divinities will carry on the cosmic business as desired or wished by this glory of Cosmic Being. I have revealed all these truths to you as I am the authority in those planes as I was the manifested personality of Sri Ramakrishna in this plane of earth. There are many things more to be disclosed to you as I am directed by the Power Divine. I will slowly disclose them as I have to write two or three more books in this manner.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, will you kindly tell me why you have selected me as your medium in writing these books.

SWAMIJI:—My boy, there are various secrets not to be divulged out. I will tell you all those things later on. You may take it for granted that it is due to divine ordination.

DISCIPLE:—Sri Ramakrishna is a manifestation from Cosmic Being as I understand from your descriptions. Is He the head of the plane of cosmic consciousness?

SWAMIJI:—I told you that He is the embodiment of the Spirit Divine in vibrant state. That state is called Mother Divine known as Para Sakthi or Chitsakthi. Both these aspects are not different although denoted by two names. Para Sakthi is the Power Divine beyond conception as it is a developing state of Divine Power. Fully developed state is Chitsakthi. Sri Ramakrishna is a manifested state of that Power Divine who is only Spirit in vibrant state. He is the presiding deity of the Cosmic state of Godhood getting evolved as a result of His advent in this plane of earth as I told you just now. Due to His attainment of Nirvikalpa state of Samadhi, He exists in Brahman as a manifested glory due to the existence of unmanifested 'I' consciousness in Him. It is this glory of Brahman that leads and guides human beings irrespective of their faith and religion to that beatitude known as Spirit Divine or Brahman. I have become His instrument in this plane of earth and it is my part in those realms of the spirit to make adjustments and evolutions

suited to this age of material science. I was destined to be His messenger who illumined the whole world with the message of harmony among different faiths and religions and also between material science and spiritual science and I am going to be the authority for further developments and evolutions in those regions also. I was brought down to this plane of earth from that exalted state of Spirit Divine by Sri Ramakrishna to fulfil the purpose of His advent.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji, you mentioned your name whenever you made reference about you in these books. Now you are using the first person when you refer about you. Why is this distinction?

SWAMIJI:—I was dictating the book to you to be published making you the author of the publication. Now I am speaking about my personal secrets to you and that is the reason of using direct speech.

DISCIPLE:—Swamiji told me that the spirit in vibrant state is causing all material developments. I am sorry to say that I am not fully satisfied with my understanding about those developments.

SWAMIJI:—My boy, that is an ununderstand-

able and indescribable mystery of the Spirit Divine. Yet I will try to summarize the process of developments so that you can have a clear idea about the developments in this cosmos. There is the most sublime state of spirit existing in eternity. It is an infinite pervasion of existence unmanifested in any way. That spirit is the substratum and self-glazing divinity of existence infinitum. I have spoken about a mysterious wish that manifested in that Spirit Divine. That wish manifests as a wonderful power known as Para Sakthi. You must have understood from my descriptions that the act of wishing is a vibration manifested in the Spirit and that wishful state is known as Parasakthi. I have also told you that vibration originates in that state only. Vibrant state of spirit produces a state of inertness as the glory of that Power Divine and that inertness appeared from the Spirit, is known as Moolaprakrithi or neutron. Spirit exists in infinite expansion, in unmanifested state and when it begins to vibrate it becomes manifested as divine ether and divine Prana. Unmanifested Spirit Divine is divine ether which is the source of the mysterious Power called divine Prana. This Prana or Power Divine gets vibrating as Parasakthi and the result of vibration is the manifestation of the matter known as neutron or Moolaprakrithi. That

mysterious divine power develops as fully vibrant state and that state is known as Chitsakthi. Due to vibration in spirit pervading the inert substance known as neutron or Moolaprakrithi, that substance gets manifested as electrons and protons in vibrant state. Divine ether in vibrant state combined with divine Prana in vibrant state is the condition prevailing in that electronic state known as Vidyumandala. Spirit manifested through the state of electronic and protonic expansion is known as cosmic consciousness. The spirit existing as the soul of the soul of Para Sakthi is known as *Para Siva* and the spirit existing as the soul of the soul of power in the developed state is known as *Siva* according to Hindu faith. Fully developed state of spirit and matter is known as Chitsakthi or Mother Divine and it is from this state of Mother Divine that all spiritual and material developments and 'evolutions' take place in the cosmos. You know that the electric energy is generated by the momentum of terrible rotation of the machineries from the ethereal atmosphere of corporeal universe. That power is capable of manifesting wonderful phenomenon in this world. You can imagine the glory of the Power Divine manifesting through uncontaminated and divine state of electrons and protons. Wonderful powers manifest from this state of cosmic consciousness and they appear as Gods, individual souls, and elemental powers. These elemental powers develop as atoms and these atoms become gross elements of quintupled nature. Both these kinds of atoms are the causes of visible and invisible universes. Sublime state of

spirit is all-pervading as the soul of the soul of everything while the vibrant state of spirit is also all-pervading as the soul of everything in the universe. You will be surprised to see from all those descriptions that the highest oneness of Spirit Divine is the basis of all developments of spirit and matter and that the oneness of matter known as neutron or Moolaprakrithi is the source of all material developments. Due to vibration in Spirit, that Spirit becomes developed as two entities known as Siva and Sakthi. Due to vibrations in the state of Siva-Sakthi union or the union of Spirit and matter, the first development is Moolaprakrithi or neutron. Further vibrations produce Vidyanmandala or the plane of electrons and protons. Vibrations in that state produce different spiritual Powers known as Gods, Divinities and individual souls and different material powers known as Thanmathras or elemental powers, Mahabhuthas or elements and five kinds of elements of quintupled nature. Both these fine and gross elements constitute all these visible and invisible universes. The glory of the sublime state of divinity of Spirit Divine is thus getting manifested wonderfully. This is in fact a comparative study of spiritual and material science.

